

Fifty Years
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Here it comes, rushing towards us, a day to mark and pass.
No different, really, than the now; no longer than the whisper of a sigh.
It is momentous. It is a moment.
We look at photos of other moments and remember,
Or see them and are reminded of how much has passed,
How half the people in our wedding are no longer present in our lives.

Some are gone from earth. Some are just lost to our daily lives.
Some have been found again, and welcomed like treasures,
And some have borne witness to that long yet infinitesimal span of time.

There have been changes, vast as a barren plateau turned to verdant forest,
Echoing with the sounds of life.
There have been changes, small as a change of clothes
Dropped on a closet floor.

What expectations and hope created our beginning—
A better world, if only we dared enough to face the unknown.
What constancy our irritations and habits, conquered
Only to rise again with new demands, new tricks.
What regrets loom up from a moment's discouragement:
What gems sparkle and glow, grown from the struggle to be more.

Our souls greeted each other on the day we met,
A silent recognition of the sacred contract with our birth.
Then promised this unknown journey on the day we mad vows,
Thinking that love promised everything,
Thinking we knew where we were going.

It was that fundamental trust in love, with all its ins and outs that got us here,
Old married folks who still laugh at each other's jokes

And delight in sharing new discoveries,
Who snip and argue when egos flare, and
Revel in the warmth of a familiar body beside us when we sleep.

Fifty years, a marker we pass proudly.
It tells nothing of the journey, except that we are still on it.
It does not say we are still healthy, that we
Have loving family, very old, and very new, and in between,
That some dear people we miss terribly, and some have slipped
Outside our vision unnoticed, while new ones come each day.

Tomorrow, when the marker has been passed, we carry on,
As we would any moment, any day, any life, reaching for endurance
For the light within and beyond, grateful for each other.
Other markers may come and go.
We can count the days, the years, but not the rest.
May we find the gem in each.