

Keeping Time

Mother shows me photos
Of a Christmas long ago.
Expressions forever preserved
Between yellowing paper and plastic.
He holds an open box
And looks up.
His eyes are brown like mine,
Lightly misted with tears.

My partner
My lover
My best friend.

Now my father's pocket watch
Sits silently
On the dresser in my room.
Maybe someday we'll get it fixed,
She says,
But right now there is no point.
My father ran out of time
Long before his watch did.

A Scientist on the radio
Once said that
Everyone gets a billion heartbeats.
A billion heartbeats.
How many heartbeats did my father get
Before his heart broke for good?
And who does he talk to
About a refund?

--Marieke Davis (2013)