

Amanda doesn't look back.

What was the use? Fran asks the sudden void. What was the use, she asks herself, the park across the street, the sky. The park is empty, the trees perfectly still. They seem to be watching her, waiting. For what?

She walks back to the house and sits on the porch steps, thinking she should make a list of groceries, tidy up. But she doesn't move. The house looms behind her, like a living thing. One day she will have to pack up everything in the house, sell or give most of it away, and move to a small apartment. Like her mother.

Thank heaven she has her work. Her mother never worked. A widow for almost thirty years, living alone waiting for one of her children to call.

Fran thinks of calling the office to say she'll be late. She's made a few appointments. Retired people who have embarked on new careers. She'll enjoy talking to them, getting to know their stories.

But what about my story, she thinks, what about me?

A faint breeze stirs the upper branches of the trees. She pulls her notebook from her pocket, turns to a fresh page, and writes:

lose weight

exercise

buy new clothes

Her closet is crammed with clothes she hasn't worn in years. She'll give them away. She'll fix up the house, starting with her bedroom.

paint walls

hang Blue Boy

hang mirror

reorganize cupboard

build shelves

Tony will help. She looks back at the page.

have hair cut and coloured?

She can decide that later.

Patricia Watson is a prize-winning film-maker, an exhibiting artist, and a sometime writer of short stories.

EMILY HUNTER

french onion soup

the pauses lengthen,
drawing shadows across polite conversation.
you move away from me,
until i feel suffocated by memories
and a sadness we once would have laughed at.
a wall of steam hides your eyes
as you place the bowl
in front of me.
my spoon plunges
through layers of awkward knots
to where the amber liquid
has been waiting,
onion crescent moons
float naked
beneath the surface.
i disturb their orbits
bringing the fragile slivers to my lips,
their vulnerability catching in my throat.
you have torn away the onion's callused, sunburnt skin
to reveal baby white smoothness.
i am filled with the beauty of you
as my spoon returns again and again
to satisfy a hunger,
i have only now begun to feel.

emily hunter is a 23-year-old Toronto-based poet and writer. She is currently working with a friend on a collaborative book of illustrations and poetry which will be published later this summer.