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L. JUNE STEVENSON

Not So Sudden

She departs the house as if going up to the corner store
 Her bags ready by the door, carefully packed, precisely
 what she needs
 No more, no less
 The best and most favoured of twenty years
 Few of them purchased by him
 She says, “Goodbye then,” what else is there to say
 Informing him weeks ago there was nothing left here for
 her
 In that unadorned dwelling, the same carpeting as the day
 they moved in
 The painted refreshed now and then, the wallpaper peeling
 in places
 The nursery and the never-used crib with its lead paint
 He grunts, not raising his head from the afternoon paper
 His lone activity until the time for ‘Jeopardy’ then bed
 Always the same, day after day
 The summer holidays at the same rented cottage
 By the same lake, year after year
 Expressionless, unemotional, was he ever any other way
 She didn’t know, had never known
 Then reaching the end of the walk, the cab waiting
 Looks back upon the seedy lawn and tidy unimpressive
 house
 Feels such sadness at the emptiness inside and out
 Feet trembling on the brink of return
 “No. No more.” Final whispered farewell, and turning,
 faces west
 To brilliance of sunset, calmness, and new beginnings.

L. June Stevenson is a retired editor of 24 years experience with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. An award-winning poet, editor and writer, June continues to freelance. June is a member of The Word Guild and her manuscript was short listed for the Best New Canadian Christian Author Award in 2008.