

## LEFT BEHIND

Who is that man who can't remember  
how to work the computer, who cried  
when he lost his wife? Who forgets  
to send the work he has promised  
and struggles to speak on the phone.  
Not the poet I knew but endless words  
which jabber and twist, excitable phrases  
collapsed into awkward conversation.

Endless digression brings me back  
to the hospital where my father died,  
the big house where great aunts and uncles  
lived. There used to be an airfield, a mansion  
on the corner; you could turn right across  
the main road or cycle up the hill to work  
with its racing car stored in the warehouse.  
The past will not stay away, it returns

in old films, in the notes to the books  
you read. It is online, in photo albums  
abandoned in my study; it turns up  
in letters or phone calls, or you see it  
out of the corner of your eye. How long  
since we lived there? The past I mean.  
It always moves away, leaving us behind.  
Things are so unclear when you look aside.

© Rupert M Loydell