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# A Love Poem for Alyce Husar

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*Paul Zimmer*

A LOVE POEM FOR ALYCE HUSAR

I am planting trees in my meadow.  
From over the hill I hear a chainsaw  
bite the morning, shrieking into  
an old oak in my neighbor's woods.  
I cut my spade into the wet turf  
and lift a divot out to see  
the dear face of Alyce Husar  
like a sleeping toad's in the mud  
where I had almost cut it in half,  
her eyes unsticking one at a time  
as her awareness rises.

At last  
she is able to focus on me—  
eighty years old—she says,  
“You're going to be mad at me.”

I had smashed into her car with  
a force that drove her thirty feet,  
hit her broadside with my pickup  
when, with not a blink of caution,  
she'd pulled in front of me.  
In a final millisecond, my tires  
shrieking and biting, I managed  
to swerve enough to avoid  
crushing the door in on her body.

When I walked her to the shoulder  
out of traffic, her hand was chilled,  
yet her lovely pearl and gray patina  
was glazed and unblemished.

She said it again,  
“You’re going to be mad at me.”  
Then added, “A lot of people are.”

I admit I was furious—  
but it was a furious love—  
a love that visits me sometimes  
still at odd, distracting moments,  
when I am planting trees or reading,  
a love so furious that I lied to her,  
“How could I be mad at you?”  
I told her. “I almost killed you.”