

# Afterparty

I held a party the other week and grief came. She wasn't invited but she came anyway; barged her way in through the door and settled down like she was here to stay.

And then she introduced me to the friends she'd brought with her.

Anger

Fear

Frustration

Guilt

Hopelessness

And they sang in the loudest voices, took up space in the corner of every room and spoke over anyone else that tried to talk.

They made it messy and loud and uncomfortable.  
But finally, they left.

And long afterwards, when I was all alone, I realised there was still someone here.  
Quietly clearing up after the rest.

I asked who she was. And she told me, "Love."

And I assumed that's why she looked familiar - because I had met her before.

"Or perhaps," she said, "it's because I've been here the whole time."

And I was confused then, because I hadn't seen her all evening.  
But when I looked more closely,  
when I looked into her eyes,

I realised quietly that she had been here. All the time.

She'd just been dressed as grief.

