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KATHY ASHBY

Another Party

There she is again, of course with him
never letting her go anywhere alone.

Why are they both beaming,
as if they’ve been shopping and
showing off their new clothes? Do they think we forgot?

We stare.
He walks across the room.
She follows.

We gather like a herd smelling wolf
heads down; keeping thoughts from stumbling across the room,
after the last time, his sudden shouts, stomping feet, slamming doors,
wheels screeching down the side street,
when our hearts dipped in unison at her shrug, glistening eyes staring through us,
the smile super-glued
how we talked around it, him, her. Someone actually said, “The elephant in the room.”

She finds a ride home; of course we want to help. Goodbyes are sweet and swift.
We hide behind how-must-she-cope and life-goes-on.
Somewhere between she lives and somewhere between she is.

Kathy Ashby is the author of the book Carol ‘A Woman’s Way,’ published by DreamCatcher NB. Kathy’s poetry and stories have appeared in numerous publications such as Descant Magazine, Canadian Woman Studies Journal, and Chicken Soup for the Soul, and have been broadcast on the program Outfront on CBC Radio One.