

## deathtime

as my american history teacher discusses  
the closing of the frontier  
and the downside of farming life

the reality of his dreary, tired voice  
starts to unravel as my thoughts  
start waltzing off the dance floor of reality  
and into the flower-sprinkled fields of my imagination

my eyes drift from the  
scribble-painted white board  
and onto the single word that is imprinted  
upon the back of every chair in the classroom

"LIFETIME"

I suppose it is simply  
the brand of a hundred other office items  
but it makes me wonder

we say "lifetime,"  
but where is this concept of "deathtime"?  
why must life  
have a time limit?

why must there be a clock wound that is,  
every moment,  
inching towards the alarm that is  
destined to sound for every soul?

why must there be an end point to life,  
a finish line,  
a last breath,  
while death is free to dance into infinity?

why must life be bound by the chains of time?  
why must "lifetime" be included in every dictionary and biography,  
yet "deathtime" is nonexistent?

why do we not live in a world  
in which one might say,  
"well, in my deathtime..."

why must these two rivals

dance in a game of tug-of-war  
in which death  
is forever destined to win?  
why must life be the one to let go of the rope?

why must life be cut short?  
why cannot death be the one to come to an end?

as I climb out of my box of thoughts and take a sip of my vanilla spice mocha,  
I sorrowfully glance at every soul sitting in their chairs of LIFETIME  
knowing that one day  
the alarm will sound  
they will let go of the rope  
and infinite death will say hello

when the teacher at last  
moves on from the topic of sod and pitchforks  
to the topic of economic development--  
which I scornfully doubt will be any more intriguing than the topic abandoned--  
I conclude that "lifetime" is included in the dictionary  
and "deathtime" is not  
because:

if death were to have a limit, and life be infinite,  
life would be infinitely less valuable.  
it is the things that have limits  
that are of value.