

# Unheard

By Helen J. Dixon

I thought if I screamed them, the words  
would change things; saying them  
aloud might alter the condition.  
But they simply bounced off,  
echoing as if in a vacant cave.  
Fading into nothingness,  
going nowhere.

The lack of response  
caused the most pain.  
For the words, wrenched from the heart,  
hurled into the world,  
seemed to be wasted on indifferent listeners.  
Unseeing eyes gazed upon my discomfort  
yet left me standing alone, unaided.

Unease turned into irritation  
causing me to yell louder,  
“See me? Hear me! I’m in need!”  
What’s wrong with my world--  
when family notices no unpleasantness—  
steps over the prostrate form of a  
daughter, sister, friend, lover  
as if she’s a crack in the pavement?

Ignoring the cries, like the alarm on an abandoned car—  
pausing only to grimace with annoyance  
at the interruption in their routine.  
‘Til finally, unheard, I shout no more  
and fall from exhaustion into the  
lonely chasm depression creates.

Waiting, patiently now, for the walls to  
cave in, cover me up, erase me and  
ultimately silence me.