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Fear

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Fear

I am afraid to say
what I'm afraid of.
Basement steps at 5 a.m.
I must go down
to push the red button
that re-starts the furnace.
I fear the cheeks
and cuticles of winter,
the snarl of time.
Bones rotting, muscles fisted,
organs pitted,
I fear the failing sphincter,
prostheses, colostomies, catheters,
efficient pities of nurses.
The flash of sun on snow is hot
pain when sinews are stiff,
the leathers on an attic's long
abandoned Bible.
On the pessary's stone tablet
shall commandments
of my age be written.

Sherry Chandler is author of *Weaving a New Eden*. Sherry Chandler has had support from the Kentucky Arts Council and the Kentucky Foundation for Women. Her work, twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize, was awarded the Betty Gabehart prize from the [Kentucky Women Writers Conference](#).