

Distant Field for Brent Ray*

Elizabeth N. Wellings copyright 1992

I came upon your story in the paper
In seven column inches it was sealed
And that night as I slept these words went rolling
through my brain,

“He died in a distant field”

What does that mean?

He died in a distant field

In a field of flowers, in a field of rain

In a field of laughter, are you feeling any pain?

Do you walk alone or in the company of friends?

I’m almost sure I’ll see you again

I am almost sure I’ll see you again

Your brother told a story of the time

When in the middle of the night you took a walk

And you loosened every light bulb on each

porch along that street

Saying, “The nighttime was meant to be dark,”

Those were your words

The night time was meant to be dark

Well, what about the moon?

What about the stars?

What kind of light is shining in the place where you
are?

Were you pulled away into the dark of the night
Or were you beckoned by the light, my friend?
Or were you beckoned by the light?

Had another dream
You were standing next to me
I was holding you so warm and so near
And you laughed to hear me say that you
should see a doctor
soon

You said, "I'm fine now, my heart is all healed"
You laughed and said I'm fine now, my heart is all
healed

Healed by the light
Healed by the force
Healed by the river that knew no other course
And the very next day I saw someone
who could have been
your twin

He looked at me like I wasn't there and I tried not to
stare at him
Oh, I tried not to stare at him

Now today I find myself all too wide awake
I do not feel you anywhere around
I guess you've gone far away into that distance field
And I am planted here in the ground safe and sound
Planted here in this (fertile) sacred ground
In my field of flowers,in my field of pain
Washed by the sunlight the wind and the rain
I walk alone in the company of friends
I'm almost sure I'll see you again
I am almost sure I'll see you again

*Brent Ray and I were good friends and played music together. He ran the lights at the Washington Center in Olympia in the years before his sudden passing at age 38. Apart from my grandparents, he was the first person I ever lost in my life.