

IMPACT FACTOR: 7.86

ISSN 0976 - 8165



THE CRITERION

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL IN ENGLISH

— 12th Year of Open Access —

Bi-Monthly Refereed and Peer-Reviewed
Open Access e-Journal

Vol. 12, Issue - 4 (August 2021)

Editor-In-Chief : Dr. Vishwanath Bite

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ISSN 2278-9529

Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal
www.galaxyimrj.com

Loss

**Karen Poppy
USA**

for E.K., in memory—each unravel only unshrouds death.

I always tell you the worst
Of me—how I gained
Fifteen pounds in this pandemic.
More, if you count muscle lost.

My lines have also lost their muscle.
Lung infection left everything enlarged,
Inflamed. In stasis, nowhere to go.
Slowed down, I've lost that diligent hustle.

These days, I wear her Carhartt jacket, pace,
Wander halls. Sleep on clean sheets.
Lost in your lost response. Silence.
Time folds over, straightens in parallel space.

We thieved from each other's minds,
Like fresh oligarchs plundering gold rooms.
Wordless in our warp and weft,
Penelopes weaving at spider-sense looms.