Her Red Coat

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I remember none of my mother's clothes except, from years ago, a red coat. Is that all that's left of those we love — a memory, a lump in the throat when we see a certain color, or a smell wafts to us on the random air? I stood in a closet, unable to tell time or say my own name, my hair brushed by the folds of her clothes. Some object will separate itself from last year's losses, I suppose, and ten years in the future engulf an ordinary day with ancient pain. The birdfeeder we gathered around at dusk, perhaps, when the nearly tame gray squirrels scrabbled to the ground down a tree-trunk. Or, more likely, it will be some object long forgotten, its dumb, accusing presence near me when I'm almost healed, or have been happy during a winter afternoon. Sometimes I long, terribly, to have no memory. I'd wake in the soon-to-be-day gray-blue light like so many other days and not be pierced by these fragments from the past. No more of this — sitting immersed in sorrow, and tasting dust.