

## Walking in Graveyard Darkness

by Rev. Dr. Robin Hawley Gorsline

Winter's trees stand tall against the night sky  
naked limbed tentacles reaching high above hard cold ground  
where once lush grass and twigs  
mixed with ants, slugs and burrowing moles.  
Now spindly stalks crunch as we walk  
the sound of frost unlike summer softness.  
To move in this darkness is to go beyond limits of light-circles  
that keep us from seeing hearing all there is.  
This ancient ground honoring ancestors,  
buried even as their spirits roam  
reminding us of blood spilled and lost,  
some gallantly, some in horror  
whether by law or out of law,  
lynching, massacre, accident  
or illness, old age, death,  
bodies black white red brown



all the same below.

We can't walk among those under our feet  
but if we did we might see more than bones, hear more than songs,  
we would meet the ghosts of terrors and past loves lived,

and dreams deferred and met.  
This chilly night moving among shadowed gravestones  
we see names, dates chiseled, phrases of praise,  
yet know there is much more,  
the place, the markers, working like light  
to be sure we see just enough but not the whole,  
messy pasts now cleansed, paths made smooth  
no struggles now except our own,  
this place a haven for us to walk in quiet above the ground,  
for those below to hear the echoes of their hearts  
in our footfalls, tears, laughter and breath.

--Robin Hawley Gorsline