

Cloistered in '63

Inside our old Manning Hotel room, any noise scared us.
Outside, bright lights flashed through the Stained hotel curtains.

We didn't know the neighbors.
We didn't know anyone in Reno for that matter.

Outside, many trains rumbled passed our downtown hotel window.
The clickety-clack shook our bed, our toys and our little bodies.

We could hear neighbors talking through the dingy walls.
We did not to open the door for anyone.

Inside the room, the old radiator rattled, clanked and steamed.
The three of us cried when the sprayer soaked our tiny, silver Christmas tree.

We could hear neighbors stomping down the hall.
We huddled in our room until Mom returned from work.

Outside, soggy sandbags were stacked like Lincoln Logs on wet sidewalks.
People dressed in black and white goes on and off orange and yellow buses.

We didn't know our neighbors.
We were only three, five and seven years-old.

Outside the Manning Hotel, snow fell and church bells rang.
Inside, Terry, Patty and I, though frightened, played quietly.

P. Rew

11/8/06