

## **Of Heartstrings, Shaped and Shattered**

**By Judith R. Merz**

Heartstrings—wound so tight and holding fast—  
Can snap like strings on a blameless guitar  
From endless tension born of use,  
Suddenly,  
Fiercely,  
The music lost in sudden tragedy.

Heartstrings—left untended and weakened by neglect—  
Can coat with dust that smothers and distorts...  
Their timbre slurred and dimming  
Slowly,  
Relentlessly,  
The beauty paled by time ill spent.

Heartstrings—nurtured gently, binding care—  
Can be slashed by unkind word or thoughtless act...  
By cuts both undeserved and unexpected,  
Viciously,  
Heartlessly,  
The love bleeds out with the saddest sigh.