telephones were so much more dramatic, so full of seriousness and tragedy back when they were
dead} and came in colors like black mustard yellow, beige, avocado, green, or fire engine
red. Looking back now, I see how the phone cord was a source of discipline. You stood there, or
you sat there. If you paste, it was back and forth across a very narrow strip of floor. If you doodled
it had to be while balancing the sizable receiver between chin and shoulder. I have a deep,
passionate longing for the old heavy desk telephones of my childhood rotary phones with metal
bells. Before there were answering machines. There were phones that rang and rang into infinity.
Before call waiting. There was the busy signal which taught you patience, and persistence.
Nowadays, phones are about so much more than simple communication. Sometimes I think my
phone is a tool for avoiding communication. I turned to it for information, entertainment. It's an
antidote to loneliness. Yes, but I may not dial a friend until after I've pored over emails and
scrolled deep into the news feed. Maybe my screen will light up with a new text. And that's that
my loneliness is cured. Today's poem takes me back to the time when telephones and the
distances they allowed us to cross were monumental. It reminds me of all the silence that’s been
eradicated from our lives by the devices that lead us do a great many things. Shop, tweet, text
post, while we purport to listen. Telephone of the wind by Eddie Kim, for dad, and for Derek, there
is a phone booth in Sochi, Japan, where people go to call the dead lovers, mothers, fathers,
daughters, sons, brothers and sisters lining up the left behind people whispering caged secrets
into breathless copper wire. Maybe you have never been in a phone booth before today. Nor have
you ever used a functioning rotary phone. your fingertip holds an edge and feels sweet resistance.
It keeps you upright as it twirls and ratchets back into place. With a satisfying or for a second. It
all feels normal. Then the pulse of dial tone dictates heartbeat, along full of steam billows out you
dial the final number to know where a silent tone How have you been? What have you been
eating? It's cold today. where something warm? Do you think of me? I've been thinking a lot about
the dead of late and what I might say to them. Truth is, I don't know. I stand in front of graves with
nothing to say nothing but wind between us. I've seen how it's done on television in the theaters.
But words catch. So wind is what I say. And I hope you will hear it feels tacky, speaking into the
wind, but so to saying nothing.

04:49
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