THE APOGEE
1999

HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
SPRING LITERARY MAGAZINE
"Read, every day, something no one else is reading. Think, every day, something no one else is thinking. Do, every day, something no one else would be silly enough to do. It is bad for the mind to continually be part of unanimity." -Christopher Morley

"Everyone has a talent, what is rare is the courage to follow the talent to the dark place where it leads." -Erica Jong
# THE APOGEE
## 1999

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I awaken from this
Dream I've had a
   Thousand times before.
But yet this time
My feelings are not
   Quite so sure.
Every other time your touch
    Was oh so soothing
       It made me want you more.
But yet this time
My feelings are not
   Quite so sure.
Every aspect comes to life
    In surround sound
       And Technicolor.
But yet this time
My feelings are not
   Quite so sure.
There was a new character
   This time in my play
      She didn’t really want to stay.
But you see this is why
My feelings are not
   Quite so sure.
I realize now this
Dream I’ve had is so much more
Because of this there is
   No we
      Just of you and her.
South of Kure Beach at Fort Fisher.........Stephen DeVoid

I've finally reached that point
where the road won't take me anymore.
What once was paved is gravel now
and leads up to the shore.
Tall dune grass- olive, yellow, brown-
is bent towards the west
by gales that blow across the cape
and waken sea gulls from their rest.

Breezes whistle through the trees
that the storms left bent and tattered
They stand half hunched toward the coast;
in them, gull's nests are scattered.
Light misty morning rain is falling,
beating rhythms on the silver roof.
This old jalopy keeps me dry, though,
and keeps me searching for the Truth.

I watch the storm roll out to sea
and listen to the cackling cry
of the pelican with the golden crown
that slowly glides just past my eye.
The book is folded shut now,
the pen laid down to rest
and silently I sit and watch
these birds flutter to their nests.
Crooked.....Kate Whitton

And I waited for that reckoning
that never was to come
Had I known this earlier
I would change what’s been said and done
To protect myself from beasts like you
and let my wound heal through and through
I would walk down a path less traveled
and contemplate how this all unraveled
To have you standing right beside me
yet feel that distance so intensely
To wish that you could read my mind
I thought I found what I have been waiting to find
But I didn’t, I found another of those beasts
my body cringes with the pain of defeat
And I still wait for the one who can
just kiss my nose and hold my hand.

Oil and Water.....Amanda Zindorf

why do I do these things,
cutting off my nose
to spite my face?
my heart and head
at war
a furious battle of dark and light.
doors close
and I forget
drugged by my worldly desires
gasping in a fog
so soon
so close to the portal,
two halves cut by a silk curtain
together yet separate
will I ever reconcile
the angel and the devil;
can I truly ever be of sound mind,
one spirit of perfect balance?
She jingles her keys  
And fumbles with the knob.  
Good thing in the morn  
She won’t have to work a job.

The quilt from on her bed  
Nestled underneath her arm.  
A pillow for her head;  
Her roommate’s her alarm

Stumbles through the dark,  
Ends up crashed out on the floor.  
‘Tis there she’ll rest her bones,  
right outside his bedroom door.

Into the hall  
And on the floor,  
The girl’s got heart

Waiting for a ride,  
Some breakfast and a coke.  
He walks towards the shower,  
Thinks this sight is quite a joke.

“Rough night?” he laughs aloud,  
then tiptoes down the hall.  
“A backstage pass, some chardonnay,”  
she giggles and recalls

The show she saw last night:  
“He played ‘Suspicious Minds’.  
We danced and drank, all right.  
I left my brain behind.”

Under the jacket  
And out the door,  
The girl’s got heart.
Blue. Eyes as blue as the sky on a crisp spring morning. That’s what I remember most about my daughter, Elizabeth Ann. But then most everything about her was beautiful. At the age of six, she had long blonde hair and was cute as a button. I cherished our Saturdays we used to spend together. I would pick her up from her mother’s house as early as I could, and we would spend the day doing fun things together. We would go to the movie theater or the zoo, or whatever the mood struck us to do. The important thing however, was that we were together.

Those were glorious days. Each and every one of them. When those days drew to a close, we were always sad at the fact that we would have to wait a whole week before we would be able to be together again. Little did I know what the future would bring.

On one particular day, Elizabeth Ann and I decided to spend the day in the park. I picked her up at nine, and we headed off complete with the picnic lunch I had prepared for us earlier. It was a warm spring morning, and everything was beginning to come to life after a long cold winter. The birds sang sweetly, and butterflies floated about lazily. The park was filled with people. Everyone was happy to be out, and they were engaged in a myriad of activities. Some played catch with baseballs and mitts, some threw frisbees back and forth. Still others just laid on blankets, enjoying the sunshine.

And then there were the ones with in-line skates. They skated merrily back and forth, playfully chasing each other. I looked down at Elizabeth Ann, and noticed a tear on her cheek.

“Elizabeth, are you crying?”
“No, Daddy.” she said.
But I knew she was. I knew every facial expression she had, and I wasn’t bad at reading her mind either. I could tell she was longing to join the skaters and have her very own pair.

“Elizabeth Ann, I bet you would like a pair of those skates, wouldn’t you?”
“Yes, Daddy, but it’s OK, I don’t need any, really.”
Elizabeth’s mother spent entirely too much time teaching her how to act grown up, and not nearly enough time letting her be a little girl. I had tried many times to explain to her mother, but she was not to be influenced by anyone, let alone me. But one thing was still true. Despite what I thought of her, she was still Elizabeth Ann’s mother, and I needed to be respectful to her for Elizabeth’s sake.

“Elizabeth, would you like me to get you a pair of those skates so you could have fun like them?”
“Could you, Daddy?” she said sheepishly, her little cheeks turning crimson.
I knew that this was a matter of great importance to her for her to go as far as to ask me for them. The day was at a close, and it was time for me to return Elizabeth to her mother. So we decided that during the week I would get her pair of skates for her and the
following Saturday we could try them out. I hugged her and gave her a kiss on the cheek when I dropped her off, promising to have skates the next Saturday.

During the week, I went to a toy store and bought the skates, complete with elbow pads, knee pads, and a little pink helmet with a little picture of Barbie on the sides. I could hardly wait for the week to end, because I knew how excited my little girl would be.

But Thursday the phone rang. It was Elizabeth Ann, and I could tell she was crying. Instantly I was upset. I did just not allow anything that made my little girl sad, no matter what it was.

“Baby, what’s wrong?” I asked, the tears already starting to form in my own eyes. “Daddy, my mommy said that the reason you wanted to get skates for me was because you are not a good daddy, and you don’t care whether I get hurt or not. She said I can’t see you anymore.”

I could hear the phone being taken from her hands, and I knew who was doing it. The hair on my neck bristled as I thought of what was happening and who was causing it. If only life had dealt me just a little better hand...

I could go into a long dissertation on the legalities and lies that then took place, but it wouldn’t change anything. God only knows that if there was anything that I could have done to change things I would have. But the bottom line was that that was the last time I ever saw my precious little Elizabeth Ann. For a long time I cried daily. Still, I think about her constantly. But there was nothing I could do. Nothing.

That was then, this is now. Today, she would be 18. That means I have gone for 12 years without ever being able to see the person in the world that meant more to me than life itself. I continued on with my life, but there was always that feeling of being empty. It haunted me frequently. Times like Christmas were the worst. I would wonder where she was and hope she was happy. I know it is selfish, but I would often wonder whether she was thinking of me.

This particular day being Christmas, was not unlike most other days. I sat in my recliner sipping a cup of coffee. I was alone, as usual. Not by choice exactly, but since I stopped being able to see my little girl, I just wasn’t in the mood to be very social. This Christmas was shaping up to be just like all the other ones in recent memory.

And then the doorbell rang. I wasn’t thrilled at the idea of having to be polite to whoever was on the other side of the door. I even contemplated the idea of not even answering, but I decided that I might as well. I opened the door.

It was Elizabeth Ann! Instantly I began crying like a little baby. I couldn’t even think of anything to say. She held her arms out to me, and we hugged. As we both cried 12 years worth of tears, we hugged like there was no tomorrow. After a long while, we were both composed enough to speak again.

“Daddy, I brought you and I presents for Christmas.”

I looked down at her side to see two identically shaped boxes wrapped in colorful wrapping paper.

“Open yours, Daddy, and I’ll open mine.” She said, now smiling warmly. Inside the two boxes was a pair of matching in-line roller skates. One pair for her, and one pair for me. Somehow I knew that we would be seeing each other a lot more from now on. I began to cry again, only this time it was from happiness.
Old Souls: For Jamie
By Peter Williams

_In life as a whole, things will arise without knowledge._
_They can come to you with a gust of wind or they arise in a dream long since forgotten, as the morning sun rises and awakens you._
_In that gust of wind, you have been blown to me. As a friend true of heart and virtue._
_In my dreams, I now see you clearly without doubt or question._
_I know you are there, a thousand miles away._
_Our spirits, however, have started to intertwine. Like two old souls meeting at the gates of Valhalla._
_They talk to each other of battles and love…_  
_We however move closer and do not realize why._
_The knowledge of knowing we have come together for one reason or another is for now…unsaid._
_The bond is reforming and our hearts, take it in stride._
_Though the miles are great, it is like a battle of courage and love. To succeed, one has to venture further on._
_No matter the loss!_

January…..Michael Hanson

_The hills_
_Rising and falling beneath the soft oak trees_
_Branches bare steadfastly clinging for dear life_
_Against the new year’s breeze_
_Dying grass_
_Aging paint_
_Front porch steps moaning under my ascent_
_Greet with open arms_
_And promises unsaid_
_Eyes imprisoned on barbiturate hips_
_And diaries spoon-fed_
_An air of sophistication bordering arrogance_
_Incense breezes invade my open lungs_
_Shivering curtains_
_Run their fingers along my arms_
Liquid Lament……..Tyler Donaldson

How are you sweet liquid?
Are you blue,
and does your conscience bother you?
Are you green,
and do you wish to scream?
Or are you red,
and dream that you are dead?

Something attracts me to you
like others are bound to food
I am bound to you.
Sweet liquid
takes my breath away,
and on any day
I will follow you.
From your tributaries in the east,
or until I conquer the beast,
My heart is bound to be true.

Sometimes, I have seen you appear
in a most interesting hue.
Not blue,
but black.
It takes me back to lakes ‘round my childhood
where I’ve swam.
But now, sweet liquid takes on a new plan.

Are you out there?
Why must you hide?
Everyday I search,
like a turtle I lurch
towards your edge.
But O’ me, O’ my
I have sweet liquid on my mind
and I still can’t find an answer why.

Something wild calls me,
I turn towards the couch
and see that I fall whenever
I feel your touch
and breathe your scent.
With a hint of flavor in the sky
you kiss me a lullaby
and from this existence I perish.
But you sweet liquid
will always be cherished.
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Walk On........Brodie Weitz

They start at the surface
The skin, the fat
The pimples, the imperfections
They see the horrid outside
They walk on

They start at the surface
The size, the shape
The coloring, the clothes
That is all they see
They walk on

They start at the surface
My eyes staring back at them
They know not the pain within my heart
The heart will never find
They walk on

They start at the surface
The truth, reality unknown
Never to look any deeper
They stop at the surface
And they walk on

Looking to the Sky.......Marisa A. DeSanto

Looking to the sky,
it’s so beautiful...
your face with the orange ceiling overhead,
shadowing you.
Golden curtains draped over your face.
Sea bright eyes shining through,
-there are miles of you.
Embracing wraps amongst the clouds,
in heaven,
content with your presence
around.
Isn’t it hypocritical when the cerebrum of an overwhelming majority of individuals could process such thoughts that are miserable? Such a heartless society with heartless views, is it justified to judge someone based on the shoes they use, to make it?

It’s a hustle to create a positive image when someone is hustling just as hard to take it.

Blatant hatred!!! Incorporated into our domestication across a free nation and that’s what led to Jasper

It’s a disaster, waiting to happen embedded images of ignorance in the soul are everlasting. Grab your white hoods and gowns, white supremacy isn’t only distributed when you distribute your pamphlets throughout the towns keep spreading hate and all of us will be falling down, keep prejudging and primitive negative images will become profound, worldwide utopia, how does that sound?

We are all kings and queens, regardless of who wears the crown

So what’s with the imperfection in our biology? Misled perceptions a fraction of our twisted beliefs which is prevalent in our society, the disperse of segregation is a myth, ‘cause in each of our minds we know that It still exists

Some of us practice the reverse of socialism with other races with persistence Deny and divide, defy hate from misunderstanding from deep inside create resistance, due mainly to fear, unity is despise our spirits are missing, animosity will eventually lead to our demise. These hectic objective social studies will be the reason that we will collide, you may slip but don’t slide, get up, stand tall, uphold the law, don’t die!!!
Strange Cries......Doug Herring

Strange Cries in the dead of night
Beings without homes seeking shelter
Scavengers running from the Light
Sweetly singing a solemn dirge

A boy stumbles down the corridor
Curses resound through the hall
He picks himself up and he struggles onward
Another victim of the endless fall

A silent prince has lost his kingdom
His subjects drowned him in a well
And in the last moment of his consciousness
Did his eyes see Heaven or Hell?

Wondering Voices echo through time
For now time has little meaning
In a world filled with black and gray
Ponder aloud the reason for being

Open a door
There’s blood on the floor
It oozes from a jar
It won’t get you far

Insane chanting from a drunkards rhyme
Walls erupting with soundless noise
They profess their wine makes them fine

Fly high into the sky
Into the swirling, silver sea
be here now.......Kate Mannion

As the candle wax drips
it drops and doesn’t bounce back.
Instead molding, stuck without stickiness
to that finger print which is all your own.
Filling in the cracks
A flame fluttering in the air making way
Down
Down
Down
A yarned black center.
Heat eats
its way toward a lighter environment
within these four walls.
So here we stay
awake but not conscious
of our surroundings.
A halo enlightens around our source,
Above our eyes, and beyond our reach.
Perhaps daylight will never come...
At the candles end
When wax pervades the core
When drippings drool on furniture and droppings stain the rug
When the fluttering flitters faster
Anticipating the candlestick,
The light will go out but still remain
Behind our closed eyes.
A Tuesday morning in late October......Stephen DeVoid

Dreamy mists soften an autumn morning.
I slowly sip the steaming coffee as
the pink skies awaken in the east.

Sunshine fills your room at dawn,
reflecting off the lamp and down the hall.
The twisted pattern resembles a kaleidoscope of gold.
Within the Rhythm.......Liz Evans

When I was very small, Grandfather said one version of a chant: “Cumulus, stratus, nimbus, cirrus, and Venus-of-the-morning.” On the immaculate front porch, he sat near me naming: “Cumulus, stratus, nimbus, cirrus, and Venus-of-the-morning.” I waited within the rocker’s rhythm for my Source to return by sky And take me back to the real place of my belonging.
What is Love?......Dolores Craddock

As defined by The Merriam Webster Dictionary, love is strong affection, warm attachment, attraction based on sexual desire, and unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for others. This definition is just that: a definition. A definition that lacks feeling and fails to reveal the true meaning of love.

Love is when you think about a certain person twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Love is when you cannot possibly picture your life without that person in it. Love is when you are having a day from Hades and talking to that person makes it all better. Love is being able to complain as much as you want and that person never quits listening to you.

Love is when you can overlook any and all faults of a certain someone and see nothing but perfection. Love is talking to that person and immediately longing to speak with them again very soon. Love is that warm and cozy feeling you get when you are holding that person’s hand or nestled in that person’s arms.

Love is wanting nothing more than for that certain person to be happy, and giving yourself totally to that person to insure their happiness. Love is respecting that person for who they are, can and will be. Love is helping that person through their tough times.

Love is a gift from God. Love is letting down the cast iron walls around your heart for only one certain person. Love is melting the icy rings around your soul. Love is enjoying every second you spend with that person. Love is getting lost in that person’s eyes. Love is being thankful that you have that person. Love is picturing yourself with that person 100 years down the road. Love is transferring that person into everything you do.

Love is wonderful and love is grand. Love fills one’s heart and conquers one’s soul. Love is something that everyone should experience.
The Game——Romane' M.L. Outerbridge

The Beginning
Two people who have never met cross paths in the strangest of places.
Instantly they connect on levels that they never thought they could with anyone else.
A game is made up, where one person tries to figure out the other.
Their game is complex and intriguing, for when one wall is broken down, or one piece of the puzzle is solved, another barrier is put in its place.
The game ends for a moment, both exhausted and somewhat perturbed because they have not won the game.
Both are intrigued by the mystery of the other, so a friendship is born.
Both silently agree that a friendship is safer than becoming enemies.
However, friendships are not always safe......

Life Goes On
Life goes on, and their paths continue to cross.
They each move on to different things, one to other friendships, the other to a new relationship.
They continue to attempt to get into each other's minds and the intrigue continues.
Her relationship ends and she is left alone to ponder what has happened.
Old emotions resurface and she is left defenseless.
And when she is showing weakness, her partner returns.
And like the scenery for any play, the stage is set for another game.

Innocence........Merebeth Praml

Looking at things without an objective eye
Can beautify the world beyond the sin on Earth
Rose glass tints pleasure to the darkest days,
And white roses smell sweeter to a child than anyone else.
The airplane’s sun mirror wings drove us
cellophane-shiny and reflecting. The flight made unrest
and morning lasted eight but twelve hours,
tiring.

A man with machine-gun stood guard in the London airport. (London?)

Several took rotted coach to Oxford.
Awe misplaced its brittle plastic seats. Backward highways and
tree-sparse foot hills were among the new
nature.

An Englishman said, “See, we have grass just like America...not so many snakes though.”

--cracked seat taxi to place in walking
distance, he said, “Tow quid, sir.” Opening my fanny pack,
I pull. “Got change for a twenty?” He
drove off
wordless and irritated. “Sorry, I’m American. It’s not my fault.” I think...

(decision: 10:30am)
I’m toothless baby needing a
diaper changed. I have 8x10 room and a huge window
looking down the Broad and Turl to High
St. There

I sit for two hours copping Eliot’s style on tourists and brick and Dante and brick.

Afraid of what’s
out there, I take a first walk
down High St. and go to
root-canal my jail. And I
know that

no one will change my diaper, but fill it up and shank and laugh.
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Anticipation........Michael Hanson

Oh, how I’ve dreamt of this moment
Lingering on long hours each memory blue and strobe-lit
Craving you in animal ways
Feigning amid the candle’s rays
Words on fire
Ultimate desire
Seducing lips
Rhythmic hips
Verboten mists
Aphrodisia is
Anesthesia

I stand here on solid ground......Brodie Weitz

I stand here on solid ground
   With little bounce or give
The grass is green, flowers rich with color
   The surface beautiful as always

I talk to the people as they pass by
   In their closed, tunnel world
We talk of friends, relationships, the weather
I act interested, humor them, offer them some gossip

Satisfied, they walk on, on this hard solid ground
To the next place where they can unload the same information
   And possibly get some more
Engage in exchanging worthless words

Do these encounters change the world?
Do they make any difference at all?
Are they just talk, pointless chatter, a wasted breath
Flowing in the sea of nothingness

I see them walk on, my life unchanged
Wishing I could have grown and gained
Yet they leave me with nothing but this poem
These questions and frustrations of pettiness and surface

Can everyone dive beneath the surface?
   Turn inside and look around
Is everyone aware of the depth they possess?
   Yet are just too scared to find it
Why the long face?.........Amanda Zindorf

why the long face
aren’t you pleased
with me?
i’ve been such a
good girl
(531)
although you wouldn’t know it
to look at me.
i smile and laugh
at all the right times
and never show the true
depth of the other universe.
where do you go
when you dream?
perhaps i’ve passed you
on the street
and we never knew.
how funny!
will you sing with me?
i don’t know the words
but you’ll tell me
won’t you?
and i’ll perform
the tricks
just show me the way
When I step towards the light
who will embrace me?
Will my grandparents show me the delights-
and delights that I search to understand?
Why is life so hard to comprehend?
If I grasp GOD’s hand
will he support me,
and which way will he turn?
The mind rhymes in ¾ time
but who is the author of the book?
From this world all I see is confusion!
All that manifests is abstract,
4 dimensional, and simple in the same breath.
I look at death,
but it terrorizes my mind!
When shall I find the answers-
to my desperate questions?
I slip into a great depression
and search for an obsession
but........
I cannot concentrate on one thing!
Life,
as it seems
forms bonds, bridges and rivers
all to keep the answer from being shown.
but only when we cease
will we actually know.
So for the time remaining
let me embrace life
and find the key to the chains
that are everywhere!
Allow me to pen my pain
from the old wood chair.
And please,
let me float through the air.
West Swing Street........Stephen DeVoid

"I'd like to go back to West Swing Street, sir, please, where, growing from branches on very tall trees, is this golden and stringy-thin-flossy-like cheese that we hang from and spin on like giant trapeze trying desperately not to bang up our knees on the stumps far below as we prance and we tease 'til that silent orange fireball sinks over the seas and our mothers come calling in twos and in threes, take us all home for supper (with nominal fees) and feed us and bathe us to wash off debris that's carried in the house on our clothes from the trees. The cheese often causes all fathers to sneeze, so the mothers must go off in search of these bees to borrow some honey. They pump and they squeeze the sticky sweet mixture to cure this disease (that all fathers acquire from the cheese on the trees their children find fun while they swing and they tease, acting just like some circus clowns atop their trapeze). Please take me back to West Swing Street, Oh, please!"
Transformation…….Shana Dallara

A warm glow of the iridescent halo atop the head of an innocent cherub. But look closely at the clear blue eyes of the playful child and find the reflection of an evil fire of destruction.

The ominous angel cloaked in a soft white light transformed in the dark red sinister demon that he really is.

At first untainted by love not corrupt by experience of life. Now, a moment in time dramatically changes for madness to control him.

Warmth……..Shannon Larsen

A touch is all that's needed to warm the cool, cool, deep fluid tumultuous like a river through my veins A prick of a finger By the thorn that is you runs my blood like lava chasing down Pompeii Blood runs hot, my skin chills
The Ship is Sinking........Doug Herring

I went down to the dock
And there I witnessed many different signs
I took them close to heart
And lost the chance to enjoy
Myself and who you are
What you mean to me

And though I'd thought I'd failed
And lost the only chance I had
There was something deep inside
Realizing that what I have
Is not so bad at all

I can talk to you
I can walk with you
I can see things clearer than before
With you
I can take your hand
I can understand
That you are here
You never go
You'll never go

I came back from the dock
And gave up everything I had
And read the daily news
To discover that
My old life had left port
And the ship is sinking
First Walk Down High St. . . . . . . David Howell

First, I went through filed crowd, girls legged of navy blue denim. Gold thread peered out the seam, like an elder’s teeth never built to smile. There’s bags from GAP.

“Everywhere, all the time, our hand down throats?” Mostly popular seem the dirt colored fabrics. They match the statues bathed by pigeon. All only see dumb stares and want of blend. They show I’m lost -- never seeing feet but other heads bouncing. The stone I step on is friendliest, touch minus other sense.

Plenty clouds cover plenty sunshine. Breezes are nice. (later I’ll write of sundown at 10 o’clock) Now its 11am and every great legend (thinker) is one not studied, pointing one more site for us to tour alone.

Grand Café’s waitress had my accent.

“Are you American?” “No, I’m Canadian.” I said, “Pretty busy place, Ay?” And she said “All the same, aren’t ya’ll” And I wonder why no one speaks to me.

I should be learning; a sidewalk is a foot path; a dollar is a pound; walkers are lowest on chain. But I pinhole my teachers and think

(naps will speed me through hours, cellophane shiny and reflecting ... hope someone will say hello...smile. I’ll find dirt, spread it all over my face and hide in the stone footpath so to touch) while night, following me, dissolves from around my loved ones, eight million miles away.
I remember the ride to get there. Packing up the cooler, helping with life jackets on my littles, and feeling the stifling heat that had built up inside under the canvas during the morning sunrise. I remember seeing her throw the anchor as I eagerly waited to get up and move. I remember the cool water touching my waist and jumping up and teasing my face and shoulders. The fish gently nipping at my feet and legs while I stood there loving and living. I remember feeling the grit of the sand on every part of me while I built ponds and cities upon the beach. I was always the first one to jump in and embrace the chilly comfort of the water, going under and being alone and being secure that everything would be there when I came up. I remember finding the smooth glass upon the edge where it is neither beach nor bay, and thinking that the water was even able to comfort the sharpness out of the glass. Going under bridges, past buoys, and through the wake of the huge ships, always showing fear, but feeling faith in the olders that nothing would happen to me. Then it happened. Then it happened.

The voices of the olders got sharper as did the glass. On my beach, developed the dead smell of fish that could not be saved. No matter how many I threw back in, none of them would live and nip at my legs and toes. The water became colder and less my friend. The days in the warm sun dwindled, as did my childlike faith. I began to look down instead of up, and there I discovered a whole world that had been kept from me by my own eyes. I realized that below my eyes were the dead, always. The last time that I remember going, I was lost on the beach, my home. I was lost in the life that was my own. I didn’t want to be found. I was found and scolded and hurt. Then we left. As we were leaving the beach, I searched it with my eyes, realizing that the details would never be replaced. As we left, I looked for my family there, knowing that I was leaving it there.

The days became cold, as they always did in between. I became colder. They became colder. I had the beach to clutch to, knowing that I had nothing. Then I woke up. She wasn’t there and he was. It was summer and I was home. I was calling her motel, and cleaning his wounds, and washing my little’s hair, and trying to fix what was broken. Trying to be good and trying to be better. Then he got bad and I had to leave with my littles and all of my self-doubt came with me. I had to leave to them. Their home was on the bay. They had dead crabs on their beach, whose smell could permeate the souls of any who visited there. The water was tainted and could not be swam in. Tainted like my life. I could only cast sidelong glances at my littles, realizing that I failed to be good enough to save them from their pain. Realizing that I could not save them from their pain and that my family was still on the beach, listening to the gulls cry their mournful songs.

At the end of the summer she came back and the littles seemed OK, but I couldn’t remember how to be OK. Their voices were still as sharp as glass and they cut and sliced everyone who would listen. And then we moved.

He left and left bitterness in his wake. The boat was for sale. I was angry and sad and alone and empty. The man came with his kids to buy it. I was so sad and jealous and alone. She went on about the dishes and the curtains in it and I was rotting. My littles were down, and I could not help them. I was useless and she did not have the time to support so much and keep us up. He could not notice. I could not save and I could not live. Not like them, so I cried. I cried.

It all faded to a dull ache and failure for me. I could function and try, but never feel the breeze and never help the littles with their life jackets again. Still I wonder, how my family is doing on the beach and are the littles wearing their life jackets to keep them afloat of danger, and did anyone tie their jackets properly. I wonder if the sharpness of the glass is still tamed by the cool waves. I wonder, if I went there, could I still go under and be alone and secure, but I realize now that nothing would ever wait for me to come up.
To Understand.........Charmetra Doakes

Confused theories stay with a person like me
I dream of you and who I need you to be
lovely for days and sweet for miles
make me want to shudder but hold him for a while
I think I'm lost in the world.
I watch my mistakes for the truth
But nothing hurts me more than reality, show me what I can and can not do
I believe in myself my hurt is for real I can't speak any words
so silent glances I constantly steal
don't be afraid of my bark
it's much much worse than my bite, so just talk to me I can't be any more wrong than I am right.

A Gift From Above.......Marisa A. DeSanto

You blew me away in an image believed not possible.
Dreaming of that special someone, yearning to find a true love.
No one seemed to be perfect in this acute community.
An empty feeling lingered my soul.
One day I caught myself staring at you.
Was I falling?
Months had gone by before our lips met.
   Oh- that kiss.
My world became complete.
All questions that once rummaged through my mind, were answered.
   Least expecting it, my angel appeared.
Lucky ........ Gwendolyn Brostrom

Lucky to feel a love so strong
The kind of love that never felt wrong

I once had a pretty little ring
I guess that did not mean a thing

He promised me that I was the one
Yet, I am not the mother of his son

The way we kissed, the way he smiled
Thought one day he would father my child

He knew me better than most
About our love he would brag and boast

He was an angel, heaven sent
With his love I was confident

I was lucky to have been so close
Lucky for me, I lost the most

I thought I had closure and could move on
But now I realize I was so wrong

He has made it hard for me
He won’t know cause he’ll never see

Our love I should not regret
The memories I will never forget

After all, I experienced a feeling so true
I had only hoped that he did too

I guess it’s true, love is blind
I had only hoped his feelings were genuine

What we had will never be
Did he know what he meant to me?