

Burial

After the others had turned and walked away from her
after the last whispered voice faded into the chill May air,

I stepped to the edge
the place that was still bare dirt and a small cloth tarp
the place where I could have dug my fingers in

as if we were at the beach, sitting in the warm sand
together, sifting mindlessly just letting sand grains tickle and fill
the narrow grooves between our fingers
hers broad, big next to my thin darting digits.

We didn't talk, really, not that I remember - as girls - just the occasional barb
widening the gulf between us; she'd call me brat or naughty
or later as adults tell her kids I was crazy.

I sat down on the little bit of wood they'd placed
to keep us from falling in.
I sat on the edge of a neat grave and saw the warm maple wood
the Star of David carved on top, a spray of Queen Anne's lace.
I sat near her - my sister - chatted a bit the way we did for two years

her hands chemical-numb on the wide chair arms
my thin mottled fingers stroking hers.

I sat at the edge
filled the void with our last grains of remembered sand
lifted the veils of separation

sent her to float at last in a roiling sea.

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