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## Stay

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**STAY**  
**By Gabriella Sanchez**

Our first swim in the sea was in the dead of winter,  
It was raining too.  
We always do things in the wrong time.  
You thought it made us remarkable, destined.  
But I always knew we were not magnificent, just wrong.

Now I keep a jar of salt water by the side of my bed  
To remind me to stop burning bridges  
With the lighter I bought for myself.  
I won't stay stuck on this island.

I can't walk by that tree anymore.  
Memories lurk down in its roots.  
Things I didn't know about then;  
Trust fractured deeper than cracks in the bench.

Seven months of trying to be whole.  
He'll drive us off the road,  
I drove us both insane.

Sometimes I pretend I'm mysterious.  
Like a hiding spot in plain sight.  
Other times I'm too dangerous for own my good.  
Crashing the party, threatening to jump.

Why do you always have to drag me back over?  
Why not climb over to my side of the porch?

Another night ends.

I shut my eyes, open my legs

And try to be small enough to fit into a muddy brown coat pocket.

It changes the song when you realize the line says, "he's on top."

Now I walk by that side of the sidewalk and think what if I hadn't turned back?

I watched him cry.

He hadn't cried since the first night he moved to the city  
and thought he'd never belong.

Now he will never leave.

"You'll be home in Spring"

He could wait till then, I couldn't.

I swore I wouldn't stay stuck on this island.

But instead I broke his bottle and shattered hearts.

If only I had known then

You can only romanticize something when it's gone,

Like a kind of consolation prize for loss.

So I destroyed it.

We drove back from the shore following night.

You held my hand, while our friends slept in the backseat.

And I knew without you saying it, that would be our last swim.