

I Can Get Used to the Water

Lilah Jeanne

I dip my toes in the freezing water,
only to jump back out onto the burning sand.
There is no middle ground,
nowhere to stand where I'm not getting hurt.

But some pains are better than others
because I can get used to the water,
but I can't take the scalding marks off my skin
from the boil of the sand.

I could move on as you pull away,
as my houses change every other week,
as you move states to start over.
I could get used to the water.

But I can't patch up the scorch on my heart
from when you told me
that I wasn't enough to keep you here.
Band-Aids don't work like that.

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I can't scrub off the raised lines of my past.
I can't take your scalding marks off my skin,
can't stop the burn of
opening your Christmas card
and seeing a new woman who's not my mom
and a new baby who's not me.

I can't get used to the water when it's raging like this.
I can't take these ugly scars anymore.
But they never go away;
rather, I learn how to hide them.