FROM THE INSIDE

Sand and water

Laura Buckley*

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Each minor change erodes my memories of you
These were the things you picked, the things you loved.
I square up to defend what was.
But it still wears on me over time
Like the waves crashing over the rocks, gradually making sand.
Little grains of you washed away with the tide.
I know it is inevitable, but I hate it all the same.
Each day is another grain in the hourglass of life without you; the balance is never in my favour.
Would keeping a shrine make it easier? Maybe.
But no shoe, plate, or photo will bring you back.
Coming to terms with reality hurts most of all.
You're gone.
But in this same reality, I am your greatest legacy, the biggest piece of you left in this world.
I am here, not washed away.
You provided care, kindness, and compassion to so many
And whenever I do the same, I feel a bit closer to you.
A grain of sand washing back to the shore with the changing tide.

Comment by Kyung-Seo (Kay) Min “Sand and water” explores what it means to remember the legacy of a lost loved one. The poem deals with what remains in the land of the living—shoes, plates, photos—all marks of personality and preference that nonetheless compose an incomplete image of a person whose life, once as seemingly solid and immovable as a rock, gradually erodes into granular particles washed away by the tides of time. The speaker comes to terms with their own life as the “biggest piece” of their loved one left in the world. Unlike memories and material remnants, the speaker remains as a living legacy.

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