

Helena
By Helena Trifillis

It's afternoon in the park and I see you on the swing
You're too young to recognize me
But I know you

I know that right now your favorite color is purple
You're taking guitar lessons
But you hate practicing
I know that when you want to be alone at a family reunion you go in the garden
And make fairy people out of sticks and leaves and flowers
You do this for hours until you mom finds you
And makes you go play with your cousins

I know that for awhile you'll wear baggy t-shirts and Bermuda shorts
And you won't care about your hair or your weight
Until you do

I know that you spend time in the hospital
On and off for years
You're losing a lot of blood and no one knows why

I know that when you're 19 you and your friend will be driving on a bridge
You'll see a man on the ledge
And when you jump out of the car to try to talk to him down
He'll jump off

And I see you in college
Getting drunk in the rock garden with your friends
You get to see a lot of California
You have a fake ID

And maybe for the first time you're fully cognizant that you're living a life

I know all that you'll be

And I'm sorry I didn't see you for what you were before, the sun

I'm sorry for all those moments I wanted to leave you in the dark, to let go of us

But now I'm learning to help us

I look back at old photographs

We have the same hair now

Will you let me be you again?