

Trauma Scale

By Kaline Mulvihill

Barefoot baby running through the green grass
A pretty smile filled with wonder and sass
Bright blue eyes and bleach blonde hairs
A fearless child free of all cares

Yelling shakes her from a dream
A chill runs down her spine with every scream
She takes her blanket in one hand
and tip toes to the stairs trying to understand

Bags are packed by the door
She doesn't realize it's about to be war
He lifts her up and holds her close
Out the door he disappears like a ghost

What's one more broken window
The anger spills as the older brother puts on a show
A vase crashes in a million little pieces
He's only getting started as his rage increases

Sweep up the fragments of last night
Let's pretend everything is alright
Window covered with a thick blanket
Neighbor's question what caused all the racket

She learned to sleep with a weapon
A small baton she got when she was seven
Fear creeps in as the house grows dark
This is when he feels the spark

He stands up to the older one
A young man who never learned to run
Fists strike with fury
She runs to find shelter in a hurry

Head smashed into the wall
A hole that will be covered by nightfall
Blood splatters across the white paint
He no longer has restraint

She barriers her secrets deep inside
A shame she will learn to hide
Her body avoids sleep
There's a fear that continues to creep

Take a bat to the parked car
He's never gone quite this far
The sirens ring across the valley
Red and blue flashes for the finale

There is peace for a while
No one feels like they're on trial
He was sent to an institution
They hope that it will be the solution

She's in the back seat and he's driving
He's angry and mom is crying
Driving faster and faster
This might just end in disaster

She screams at him to stop
But he wants to feel on top
The car begins to shake
He slams on the break

The world spins outside the window
She has become part of his show
Car horns blare and headlights pierce the blackness
Will she ever understand his madness

He screams that he will take his life
Will he choose that black handled knife
His anger continues to grow
Ready to take the final blow

A cigarette in hand
He continues to demand
Burns a hole through moms' shirt
He only feels his own hurt

Toy trunk blocks her door
She sinks to the floor
Trembling and stuck in her head
Wishing she was dead

She is twelve and makes her own decisions
The lawyers make the custody revisions
They move in with dad
The man who has always held their hand

She escaped, but not from the pain
It keeps her shackled with a chain
She tries to run from it
But it will never quit

Alcohol consumes the younger one
He barriers his pain, but will never run
One dark night he took his life
A wish for peace in his afterlife

Darkness in her shadows
She wants to surrender to the gallows
The pain pierces her every memory
Her own torturous documentary

She pulls out the one with the sharpest blade
There's no longer time to be afraid
She rests the glistening edge against her pulsing vein
How will she ever explain

The breaths come quicker
The air is thicker
Her hand trembles as she goes numb
Every sound falls into the background as a hum

That night as she sunk to the floor
Wondering if she could take anymore
She put down the knife
And decided on life.