

The Stolen-From-Us

Even the wind howls in remembrance
as the students gather
in their best purple polo's
around the boulder, near the dorm
she lived in during her short time here.

Too short a time.

An albino squirrel jumps
down from its tree—knowing
one of these people will shoo it away
with a chocolate-chip cookie
if it waits long enough.

The boulder reads:

“It is not the length of life,
but depth of life.”

And while her old friends are giving
their speeches and everyone around you
is crying, all you can think about is how
the quote would sound so much better
if a simple “the” was added
between “but” and “depth.”

The mob walks with heavy feet,
dodging the furry rodents
every step of the way,
over to the pool
where she spent most of her time,
practicing for competitions she would
never participate in.

Chlorine burns
your eyes—finally
you look like you're crying!
All this because a boyfriend went mad
and hit his "love"
again and again
until he was beating
a motionless body.

Her face—beautiful,
shines beyond the grave
at the crowd here to remember her.

Do you promise?

Never

to harm

your loved ones

as long as you live?

I do.

And you better too.