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The Wings of an Angel

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THE WINGS OF AN ANGEL

Walking along the
unsheltered shoreline,
the wind scattering
litter on the beach.

I notice a black and
white feather,
playing tag with
someone's old Sunday comics.

Tom, an old Indian
friend, once bound
together two feathers
like that.

Ceremoniously, twisting
strips of leather
between them.

When he finished,
he held in his hands
a pair of
angel's wings.

We hid them.
He said we'd
get them later,
at a time unknown
to both of us.

But I forgot those
angel wings.
I guess Tom didn't.

Because he placed them
on my Grandma's chest,
just before they buried her.

Tom told me not to
worry anymore.
He said that Grandma
sure did make
one heck of an angel.

We went home
and Tom showed
me how to carve
a whistle out of wood.

But that day is gone,
and I'm just standing
here with some
stupid feather
in my hand.

Right now I wish
I could be with
Grandma, instead of
being alone with my
shallow memories.

by Heather Herrick