It was raining...

Christy Sundberg*
When your answering machine picked up. I listened to your voice, hollow throught the earpiece. Lancing drops drummed on the glass.

Shivering in my drenched clothing, I slid down to the floor of the phone booth. The receiver found the crook of my neck where your head should be.

I waited through the prerequisite beep and chattered out some semblance of a message. Consciousness fled when the machine cut me off. The winds played a haunted lullaby.

Watery dreams washed through me, each the same as the last. Always your eyes staring into mine, your fingertips on my face, your lips a luminous smile.

Night became day in a heartbeat as clouds squeezed their last tears. Sunlight tugged at my lashes, cutting the darkness, slicing the fear. Morning failed to deliver your presence.

I cursed Apollo’s impatience as I eased myself to my feet, legs stiff and shaky. Bedraggled tendrils fell between my eyes and the phone. The coins made a dull clink as they fell.

The sun was shining when your answering machine picked up. I listened to your voice, interrupted in mid-sentence. A drowsy soprano relayed your unavailability.

Shivering in my anger and pain, I slid down to the floor of the phone booth. The receiver brushed my stomach where I was just beginning to show your parting gift.