Something Left

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“IT’S JUST not right anymore.”
“You’re sure,” he said.
“Yes. I’m sorry. I am! But. . . .” She shrugged and looked down at the pool of water beneath the small wooden bridge.

Ken put his hand on hers. She did nothing. She felt the pressure of his hand on hers and was careful to keep her hand at rest. He was looking at her. She knew that. She didn’t move her hand.

A couple reached the bridge. Their feet made hollow sounds on the planks. Ken took his hand away. The couple passed, speaking quietly.

“Well!” He cleared his throat. “I guess I’d better be getting you back.”

“Okay.”

Their feet shuffled across the worn wood. A mild breeze came and Ken caught the scent from her hair.

He smelled her hair and felt hair wisps on his nose and lips and cheek and he put his arms around her shoulders and kissed her neck and she turned and put her hand on his chest and looked up and there was water in her eyes and she put her head against him and he held her for ever so long and short and innocent a time. . . .

Their feet passed from the bridge onto the sidewalk. Pebbles and grains of sand scratching against the walk.

“Someone else?”
“No, Ken. Please. I told you. It’s just not the same.”
“Dammit, don’t run from me again!”
“You’re hurting me!”
“I’m . . . I’m sorry . . . but please, don’t run from me.
A goodnight kiss isn’t that much; it doesn’t mean you love
me, it just means . . . Or if you don’t want to just say so, say no, I wouldn’t mind so much. But don’t run from me. You make me feel like a snake.”


“Goodnight.”

They reached the steps of the dorm. Ken put his hands on his hips. Maybe she wouldn’t run.

“Goodnight, Ken.”

“Goodnight.”

She went up two of the steps then hesitated, turned.

“Ken, it was good for awhile.”

“Yes. It was very good.”

They both turned then. Ken heard her shoes clip up the steps and the large door open and close. He walked then quickly away and didn’t slow his pace till he reached the bridge. He stopped for a moment, then walked to where they had been. He put his hands on the railing. There was still a warmth where she had leaned. He moved his hand over the spot of warmth. There was a pebble on the rail and he absently flicked it off. It hit the water and the air carried its second of sound and the sound faded, but something lasted past its sound, some small innuendo in the titillated silence bore witness to a pebble having been dropped in a pool of water.

Hail--and Farewell

by Tija Spitsberg

English, Jr.

The wind tossed my hair into my eyes. The breeze felt cool, but what was left of the afternoon sun penetrated into the skin, and made my face feel warm. The lake was still clear. In another week it’ll be crawling with that horrible sea-weed, I thought.