

Jesi Nelson

Removing the Rum Goggles

I struggle to remember exactly when
the strength of your hold on me increased.

We started innocently enough: casual encounters,
dinner dates, parties with friends.

You introduced me to your cousins: Gin, Vodka, and Whiskey
and I instantly fell in love.

You helped me celebrate my sister's wedding,
my nephew's graduation, births,
holidays, family gatherings.

You helped me know laughter and friendship and love.

You comforted me in times of trouble and tribulations:
the death of my grandma, the loss of a love,
the end of a job, the loneliness I often felt,
even when I wasn't alone.

Before long, you were in every aspect of my waking days.

I couldn't stop thinking about you
and couldn't wait to get home to you.

You invaded my thoughts, invaded my dreams
began controlling my motives
and wouldn't let me make a decision without you.

It seemed like, overnight, you had
a death grip on me and I couldn't do anything,
couldn't go anywhere without you.

I started seeking you out every night
and often saw you alone in my living room,
sitting on the couch watching t.v.
and most nights I didn't remember going to bed.

The blackouts were the last straw.
I knew I couldn't have you anymore when
I started to forget what I had done last night.
The hardest thing I've ever had to do
is give you up knowing
I can never go back to you.

But I've realized that
I've missed out on much of my life
because of the strong hold you had on me.
I'm a different person now.
I'm able to deal with my feelings
and I feel much less alone now that you're gone.

It's been two years now
since our last meeting.
I wish I could say it's been easy
to go on without you,
and I still think of you often,
but it's definitely been worth it
to be able to see life without
the rum goggles on.