

“1000 Buttons”

By Taylor Donnelly

The child stood on stage until she changed her mind
then walked away, alone and tender
and everyone was kind
and understood
but her mother, tension-lined,
and strapped to a baby sister
could do no good
so felt disaster

and everyone was kind
and understood
but it was rough
such moments are
and whatever that girl at the carnival thought
or felt or will remember
of the outdoor audience, the dripping skies,
the unsung song she'd practiced in the car,
the mother unknocking, the moment caught,
is seeded in her mysterious mind
but anyway she won a prize
for guessing the number of buttons in a jar
or close enough.