

Friends for Life

By Nan Bialek

She's the best of friends because she knows your story.

As you played on her shore, plunking sticks and stones and shells in your pail, she tickled your teeny toes.

She carried you in a sailboat out past the breakwater, showing you the city from a fresh point of view.

When you and your boyfriend shared a first sweet kiss, she was just over his shoulder, twinkling under the starlight.

She was dancing right there with you at summer festivals, with rock riffs rolling across her waves and fireworks crackling across the sky.

That morning when you slumped down on the bluff, head buried in your hands because your heart had been split wide open, she tended to the wound with the healing rhythm of the sea.

You brought the dogs to the park so they could romp in her waves. Later, you brought your children to the beach to introduce them to her majesty.

You've remained true-blue to each other in raging storms, in the prime of summer, in December's cruelest wind and in perfect, abiding peace.

She's the best of friends because she knows your story and embraces it all.

And so, Lake Michigan, we will always love you back.