

Point Cape May Crystals

I leave my husband at the inn
with his work—his relaxation
and re-charge comes from
penciled physics equations;

mine, by aimlessly following
where the road takes me.
Turns out, today it's the place
where pavement meets the beach.

I squint at camel-colored sand
that sparkles with crystallized quartz.
Slate water stretches way out
under a massive sky, its curve holds

the whole end of Delaware Bay
as it runs into the Atlantic Ocean.
I see no dividing point and draw
a breath that sounds no in or out.

At town's edge, old cross finials rise
from sepia dormers of a Sisters' retreat,
and a processional of floor-to-ceiling
windows line the clapboard frame.

Narrow wrap-around porches hold
rocking chairs, swaying, awaiting someone.
I listen for rhythms of prayer and silence—
over dunes and sea grass, surf pulsates.

Summer sage spills over lavender at nearby
gingerbread-cottages, creating perfection,
like the streets—straight as bicycle spokes
radiating out from Pavilion Circle.

*I'll rest a while here, I muse, lay low
on the ground near Lily Lake;
perfumed, I float sky-high to the lighthouse,
thin and white with its little red cap.*

Back at Sunset Beach winds are swelling.
I catch whiffs of chili-dogs and hot coffee.
Gently rounded Philly-Jersey twang washes by
as I join others, barefoot, at worn grey tables.

A fiery ball begins to drop in the west,
dazzling water and sky, a flagpole in silhouette.
To Bugler's *Taps* a few old men lower
the Stars and Stripes—casket-flags of veterans.

Afterward, back at the inn,
I try to convey it all to my husband:
a litany of nuns, intoxicating lavender,
chili-dogs and solemn honors . . .

But I cannot rightly capture
those hours—except to say,
this is a place where native pebbles,
Cape May Diamonds, wash up in the sand.

Silently, I take away the pencil and fold
his fingers around a glinting gem.
Amused, he taps his afternoon's squiggles:
You know, what I study is crystal growth.