

Sister

By Cassandra Harlan

My sister tells me

Sit down and write

But she has no idea what she's asking me.

I'm bitter and lonely

my spirit is withering.

I have no idea what healthy means.

I escaped

A house of horrors

a not so safe space.

No one thought

To fight for me

No one thought

To rescue me

I keep more secrets

Than anyone knows.

Like the time when

Chester my Molester

Laid on top of me

And the fear

caught in my throat

of him doing the same to the other

younger, sweeter

dearly beloved cousins and nieces

So

I told myself it was okay

I would get over it

Someday

And let him slide his tongue in my ear

Let him put his hand inside my underwear.

Or that time when I was dragged

across the floor by the hair

tossed on a pile of dirty laundry

Beaten savagely

For daring to speak

My mom was clearly in need

of a cool, dark, drink

I learned the art of silence

And withdrew

Reading became my superpower

And I magically disappeared in plain view

While the lie she told:

“I did the best I could.”

Grew....and grew...

My sister has no idea

What writing this down

would do to me

How words tumble out

Raw and real

And they flow

And I can't stop

Telling the Truth

My sister tells me

Sit down and write

But she has no idea what she's asking me

To do.