Once upon a time recently in...a land nearby

The Strip is Just One Street

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The Strip is Just One Street

By Kathleen Swain

my sister moved to Las Vegas
thinking the glittering lights
and the sound of coins clinking on metal
would cover up
with their glamour
the shattered life she left here,
her new marriage already
beginning to crumble,
the ruins of our parents
tumultuous lives,
our disintegrating grandmother.
trading rabbits and squirrels
for baby quail, cockroaches,
and black widow hunting,
one night we took a flashlight
to find the tiny monsters we
so desperately feared.
and I felt guilty, for
the intricate webs they built
were swept away each morning,
weighed down by dew,
yet each night were dutifully rebuilt.
wishing I could just as simply
rebuild or recreate
my life each day
I wandered off into the darkness
towards a fountain.
the stagnant water held
comical rubber ducks with
sunglasses on and
my sister said they had
to turn the fountain off
because of the water storage.
I looked back at the ducks
floating so lonely
and I thought perhaps
the plastic ducks and the poisonous spiders
and my sister and I
weren't so different after all.