

Spring 5-1-1992

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Recommended Citation

Sloane, Alexandra (1992) "The First Real Goodbye," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 11 : No. 2 , Article 38.
Available at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol11/iss2/38>

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The First Real Goodbye

Alexandra Sloane

Remember when
I was five and
you were ten--
you wrapped yourself in
a crisp white bedsheet
and draped your head
with a faded flowery curtain.
I walked before you
covered in a huge yellow beach towel
and clutching wilted dandelions
as we hummed the Wedding March
and sauntered
down the stairs.

Together
we grew up
leaving frosty milk and
crumbly cookies
out for Santa
and chatting at midnight over
Rocky Road ice cream.
When the slimy slithery monster
under my bed
threatened to devour me,
you let me sleep with you
in the safety of your frilly canopy bed.
You understood--
my best friend forever.

And now you stand
in soft white satin that
shimmers through the church's
stained glass windows and
a real veil sits on your
perfectly curled brown locks.
I still walk before you
but this time in
frosted pink satin
and cradling
dainty pink roses.

As you disappear down
the velvety aisle,
you turn to me and
the very same hand
that used to wipe away my tears
now waves goodbye.
You lean toward him
and the same cotton candy pink lips
that would kiss my scrapes and bruises
now kiss him hello--

A subtle greeting
to your new best friend.