

Lost Child

by [Angela Alaimo O'Donnell](#) in the [July 2025](#) issue

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For our brother Lou

We always knew we would lose you.
The youngest child in a gaggle of cousins,
at two you wandered down the beach,
I am the Boss embossed on the bottom
of your toddler-size bathing suit.
An hour later our frantic search
ended when you waddled back to us,
sat your sturdy behind on our blanket
and picked up your shovel & bucket
still wearing your plastic sunglasses.

At five you got lost on the boardwalk,
strayed miles from us and from our hotel.
Later we found you were brought back
by a cop, whom you had the sense to tell
the name of the place he could find us,
Normandy a word you somehow knew,
its letters in neon green and blue,
though I'm sure you could not read it.

Getting older, you got lost faster
and could not be easily found.
Drugs, beer, girls, a near disaster
in your Jeep on the beach. The whole town
knew you were trouble, but loved you, too,
the same way we all felt about you.
Until you, at last, got lost for good.
Just like we always knew you would.