

Angel of Asbury Park

By Maureen Nevin

If she could exist, merry strains of Gay 90s nickelodeons
Would float above
As she promenades along the boards
Her dress would shimmer against the gray dead wood
Stripped and dried by salt and sun
Stiffened against the warp of dark deals
Defiant in the muffled dark pursuits of summer nights

If the Angel of Asbury were here wouldn't we
Have seen her diaphanous skirts fluttering from the wooden carousel
Heard her laughter rise as she
Twirled round and round
Oblivious to the slippery rendezvous beneath the grinding machines
Innocent to the morning mists shrouding the offers of Kingsley Street

Maybe not, maybe this angel would know every drifter's soul
And shiver in the low moan of the diesel as it cuts through the night
She alone would hear the murmured secrets rising from the surf
She would know the dance hall gal shunned by glittering grand hotels
Left trembling to the vibration of distant piano keys

A solitary horn might sound her predawn departure. Have you heard it?