

Just Beyond

by Joanne Jagoda

I try to recall
cousin Celia's second husband
you know...what's-his-name
or that French actor from the TV movie
but names elude me
hover just beyond reach
wily fugitives
from my once impeccable memory
they hang in that murky space
I can no longer reach with alacrity
sit defiantly on the tip of my tongue
so bratty-- they sneak home at 3 in the morning
when they wake me up
and give me the finger
I used to spout the prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*
answer the questions on *Jeopardy* before the buzzer
this aging thing-- it's a bitch
hey, this is *me* who danced to the Doors
I thought *I* would surely dodge that bullet
I don't get why bad memories linger
like the burnt smell after a fire
stuff you wish you could forget
why can't those thoughts
retire for good to that place of hazy recall
ah... it's the faded snapshots I treasure
sweet images of good times
ebbing and flowing like gentle currents
gathering on the banks of my mind--
I will fight against this aging thing
but I fear the battle is just getting started.

