

# Sea Shell

*by* Michael Tusa

He left me, some time ago, scurrying away, just left me, just  
glistening piled on hot grated rock.

I protected him selflessly, protected his back, let him seem normal,  
let him seem natural, let him blend in. And now people step all over  
me, say ouch, then leave.

Sometimes water gets to me, fills me up, lets me ride the sea, but  
eventually, i'm just spat out again.

Useless.

Sometimes even a gentle hand will lift me up, look at me, see that  
i'm not special enough, not enough stripes, too few spots, a crack  
here or there.

They toss me.

And again

I sink

as the wind buries me deeper, all of us isolated, so close together,  
blind in the dark sand. If we had voices

we would yell,

if we could move

we'd dig our way out.

But the only noises we make, the only things we can do, are to let  
you hear, the empty sounds we make when you  
press us against your ear.

