

What Goes Above Our Heads Sometimes Does Not

by Nicole Monaghan

We floated balloons to my dead uncle in Heaven for closure. I couldn't figure, at age seven, how he was under the ground and in the sky too. Mom touched Dad on the arm. It was Dad's brother. It seemed like Mom was sorry for something else. My sister, age eleven, told us to stand in a circle and say out loud all the things we loved about him. I said his ice cream sundaes; he'd always had waffle bowls and both kinds of sprinkles. My sister said his big muscles and the way he'd made her feel safe on family vacations, especially out on the speed boat. My Dad said the way he'd treated us kids. Mom said he was a complicated man, one that no one really understood. Dad winced.

