POEM FOR PELAGIC ASHES

By Paul Pera

One

The waves march in lock-step

white spats buttoned below the knee

rolling like a player piano sound track

from an arbitrary horizon

Two

the gulls glide over and scrutinize the souls

and darkened forms amid silvery schools

of complicated light

a fleet of dark struck souls paroled

from purgatory

Three

within the shower walls

as medication is wearing thin

there is a lost dialect for the psychotic

the loose floor boards in the hardwoods

share a memory of vacated life

Four

In the half closed eye of the moon

lovers kiss between jail house glass

hands gesturing like a mime putting

on make up in the dark

Five

The sea opens and tightens

it's thighs and reposes

souls reach to escape the slurry of returning ashes

a troupe of giddy killdeer

like drunken sailors zig-zagging on shore leave

Six

On this rotating planet in the detoxing waters

Dad waded with pants rolled up

into a curled tourniquet above his calves

"Try to cast beyond the second cap", he'd yell

"You know I only made the 9th grade and can hardly spell,

this I know, I hope you'll listen

I can box, draw and know peace when I'm fishin' "

Seven

hollow prints in the sand collect ash

that the tide quickly erases

there's a child held myth that dying is . . . holding your
breath too long . . .

it's sleep walking that stops near a window

looking into dusty space for ghosts

the nun's told the dead ask us for answers "so

turn your heads to the side, listen"

dying's when you call a deceased friend, the machine
answers

"Sorry, I am no longer here to take your call, I would really

love to hear your voice, one more time. At the beep . . .
leave a message

Eight

Ashes wash into the marrow and divots of children

chasing kites dissolve into the salty spume

The sky bandaged by the night and the beach

littered with wood fires

as a tale says "Time will kill us all"

lets live in a world that others miss

in an undertow we can't out run

silent currents, random memories

and a necessary journey in these homeless seas.