

She twirled the pink skirt,
of her long-hemmed dress
Laid a flowered wrist,
on his bow-tied chest

They danced and they smiled
with all of their friends,
She had no experience,
with this sort of trend

She was a sophomore,
he, a graduating senior
She questioned his sudden
sloppy demeanor

Escorted to a corner,
put a finger to her lips
Silenced her as
he took a few sips

“Justin,” she whispered,
“This just isn’t right...”
“Shh,” he whispered,
“Don’t ruin this night!”

They continued to dance,
she continued to worry
He continued to drink,
his vision became blurry

Prom King and Queen,
hooray, Senior Class!
“C’mon babe,” he slurred,
waving goodbye as they passed

He climbed to his truck,
one he borrowed from Dad
“Justin... you’re drunk”
Confused; & now mad

“I will be fine,”
he didn’t notice her crying
“No, I won’t go.
Prom isn’t worth dying.”

Drunk and enraged,
Justin sped fast away
She cried in her dress,
which was starting to fray

She called mom & dad,
who rushed to her side
Her father was proud
she refused the death ride

Just then she heard
sirens and shouts,
Just down the road
was a truck gone off route

They rushed to a boy
in a tux pink and white,
His breath became short
that warm high school night

A trembling hand
reached up to her face,
“I’m sorry” he whispered,
her tears fell with grace

With panicking voices
they worked and they strived,
If he had been sober
he’d have arrived alive.

- Catherine McElvain