Old Man of the Sand
Bonnie Van Hall

You have always been here,
your face carved of wind and rain.

Like the knotted beech which
suffers lakeside seasons,
you stand your ground, grit
of feet twisting, holding,
rooted.

Old man, born of sand,
your curving arms call up the wind
elated, it glides across
your gleaming skin, dusting
your finely weathered cracks.

How is it, old man,
your feet trace circles in the sand
like a wisp of beached grass; yet
your body travels on to
converge with
lake and land?

On that day when the wind
draws back into its center
and you return, powdered old man,
into the sand,
lonely gulls will whisper your
secrets to me, and
I, too, will embrace
the elements.