

Now And Then I Look For You by Natalie Kusz

Two alleys down from the bodega, where I found you that time. Under the defunct, overturned hot tub that once or twice served as your roof. Near the law-office dumpster brimful with secretary gifts, unopened and tossed and good for barter — evidence, you said, of a boss who got out of line.

At the needle-exchange room. In the shed with the rope-handled door behind the foreclosed blue house the neighbors stripped of copper plumbing.

In the newspaper's morning arrest report. On the jail roster. At the county coroner's lost and found.

At the food bank Wednesday, the breadline Friday, the missionary soup kitchen all other nights. At the food-stamp application window.

Beneath the overpass where street people stash their works.

Every last place I've ever ferried you to retrieve a hidden duffel of your own: the rock at the edge of the pocket park, the bullet-pocked power box for the city, the construction-site castoff heap, the evergreen freeway embankment.

If I find just a vestige, I think, I will rest.

Published in *The Sun*, September 2019

<https://www.thesunmagazine.org/issues/525/now-and-then-i-look-for-you>

Questions to consider:

1. What is the structure of this essay?
2. What effect does the title have? What information does it give you? How does it set the reader up emotionally?
3. What effect (emotional or otherwise) does the listing have of the different places where the narrator looks?
4. What do you think of the end? How is this part of the essay different than the rest? What is the effect of that change?