

Life Begins at Ten

by Bill Russo

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The Cape Cod Canal Railroad Bridge.

Jumping off point from the island of Cape Cod to the State of Massachusetts.

The 130 foot high bridge was the largest vertical lift structure in the world when it was built in the 1930s and is still the second largest in the United States. The bridge is lowered to the level of the water, at the approach of the 'Cape Cod Flyer' – a speedy bullet train to Boston.

I chose this photo for the cover of this story, from an old postcard in my collection, because the bridge is a metaphor for new beginnings.

Some people come to the Cape over the bridge for a fresh start.

Some leave the Cape over the bridge for a fresh start on the mainland – perhaps in Boston or New York.

Others use the bridge as a jumping off point to leave the world, flying swiftly through the air until they plunge into, and are claimed by, the frigid and swift running, canal waters.

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“One!”

He does not see or hear anything. How could he? It's only one!

However, in that flitting, fleeting split-second between one and two, there is brightness; the sun?

Just above his head a dazzling illumination of some sort, flickers.

“Two!”

He’s fairly sure that he moved a finger, perhaps two or even three. It’s hard to tell because he still cannot actually see or feel anything.

“Three!”

His eyes are open and he might be able to see except for that blinding light shining in them.

His ears reach out and grab the sounds of... he's not sure what.

He thinks that perhaps it is the rumble of the breakers at Sea Street Beach in Dennis Port; bashing the rocks and surrendering their wildness while transforming into gentle foam that caresses the Cape Cod sand.

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