

there was a tornado that lifted us to heaven

and there
 i met my daughter for
the first time
 i planned her
funeral but it
 was mine
too we scratched lottery
 tickets and cried
like we used
 to and i laid you to
rest when i woke up
 you know you
are in heaven when
 winning is the same
as dying

My partner and I were having a little weekend getaway at his sister's house in Atlanta. The day was about what you'd expect, we weren't exactly doing anything, just kinda hanging out. Around 2:00, they wanted to visit their mom's house suddenly. Totally caught off guard, I threw some clothes on and sent out a message to my writing group that I wouldn't be there (we meet virtually at 2:00 on Sundays). When I got ready, I found them in the backyard looking up into the sky where a giant vortex was forming directly above us. Rather than run away or seek shelter, we stood there watching it and it eventually sucked us up.

After a few minutes of surprising calm, we gradually floated down to the floor of a Walmart where there was a queue of people and a reverend checking people in. I got separated from my family and headed for the end of the queue. Each person I walked past seemed to know me and each of them gave me a \$1 scratch-off lottery ticket. By the time I got to the end of the line, the tickets had transformed into a celebration of life program. I opened it up and immediately recognized the deceased as my daughter. I was her mother. Then it hit me that I had just walked past her in the line. I went to her and she was already crying as she had been when I first passed her. We hugged and cried together. She didn't remember me, so I told her a story about her graduation party. As I told it, I realized that I had made these programs myself.