

ROLLING LIKE THUNDER

by barry graham

It was Saturday. Four seagulls flew overhead. She was sitting on the bench beside the Korean War Memorial. An Asian man in NY Yankees apparel took pictures of his children posing in front of it. We both laughed; probably for different reasons. The Asians left. I sat beside her on the bench. Sand from the beach still wet on my feet. The ocean smelled like decomposed plant life and clinically despicable vagina, but I still spoke of its power and my fear of it in moonlit clichés and she still listened. We talked about places we been: squatting in an office building in Brooklyn, community college in Detroit, the love of her life leaving her stranded in Philadelphia, the way her eyelids danced when she spoke, like cocoa skinned mamas in the sexiest spots of Rio de Janeiro. It rained. We stayed another hour outside and walked the boardwalk to the beach. The wooden planks were slippery. I stumbled every third step. She held my arm the rest of the way even though she was too small to keep me from falling if I fell face first full force. I thought it meant something, but then she let go a full step before we reached the sand. We walked the shoreline. She ate two pieces of pizza and told me she spoke fluent French between mouthfuls, but didn't immediately say anything in French to prove it.

