

## MY DOG by Greyson Smith

As you approach the dog, you begin to wonder aloud, "I wonder if I ever will actually find out where that cool guy went, that one I knew for sure from my past, that one who gave me all that cool attention, that one who was real, that one with the good ribs and handsome jaw and piano hands," and the dog begins to growl in the way dogs do when they're scared but not surprised, "he was great and I was happy when I was there I think," this is a lie you know but it feels good to say it out loud that you had that and that it was yours at a time, "and y'know what as long as I can really know that he's real and achievable," the dog's growl gets louder and more feverish, like the dog knows you and knows what you want to do to it, to starve it so that it might resemble this fantasy cool guy you know you knew, "I don't think it's that much of a stretch to say," the dog skitters backward in an effort to escape, but you have it trapped here in the corner of this chain link enclosure, "that you're being a little bit unreasonable in your unwillingness to-" the dog snaps at your hand, drawing blood and sending your brain a shock of what begins in your hand as idle acceptance and vague disappointment and travels through your forearm as distant annoyance and wonder for the unreachable and passes through your chest as a reinstatement of what you've always felt and just as it hits your brain as a reminder of the ball and of all the reasons you have the ball, you open your eyes and realize that there was no dog really, and that you have simply scraped your hand along the twisted wire of the fence, and you remember that the dog park closes at 7:00 and they lock the gates and you don't know where your keys are and even then you can't see your car in the parking lot so might as well put pressure on the wound and try your best to make yourself comfortable here you guess.