

“Lost” by Ava Jo

I swear it was here before
Under the bedsheet, or behind the stiff hotel armchair
Resting behind the drapes my brother and I love to twirl in circles
My mind tells me it's still in the plain, white room
But my chest, my bones, every muscle in my body
Tell me it's gone
I don't know who took it
The soft little green turtle
With shiny black eyes that would stare up at me lovingly
It traveled all the way from Japan
Where my mother bought it for me, before she even knew me,
Before I came into the world
My turtle was irreplaceable
I took it everywhere
To New York, to Thailand,
Even back to where it came from
In the heart of Tokyo
And then, somewhere in a hotel room in Atlanta,
On a sweltering, cloudless day,
While we retraced Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and death,
It disappeared.
Right in the folds of crisp white sheets
A remnant of who I was and where I came from,
Swept away, gone forever
I felt myself drowning in murky waters
Unable to resurface and face the truth:
No amount of sobbing would bring my turtle back.
Sometimes I hope that some other girl found it
And it's still out in the world somewhere,
Comforting someone else as they lie awake in their bed
But to me,
It's lost forever.