



## RISD Beach

BY WILLIAM GILLESPIE

At the RISD beach there is me, the whirl of a solitary insect, a gently lapping bay, an old tire, and an old man approaching. The weather is cool, the sun warm, and the flies biting though not as badly as in New Jersey. The sun is burning through a cloud, the cloud has hues of grey and a scalloped edge, it is beautiful. The sand is also a lovely color, although one does not identify it as colored. It is the color of dryness ranging through moisture. A tiny river snakes across it from the marsh to the bay, perhaps at high tide the current is reversed. A seagull casually practices sweeping arcs across the sky that are the best thing I've seen all day. A tug boat drags a barge across the horizon--who pilots it and how do their concerns compare with those of grad students? Golden retrievers in the distance. Fuck I miss you, you are my entire body, the peculiar hunger that makes each day as tense as piano wire. An unaccompanied dog appears and walks to the surf, silhouetted by its silver

ripples, the reflection of the white shining cloud that contains the sun. She tosses a stick into the water, doggy swims out and retrieves it. The beach has stumps and rocks and a mossy patch. A place where the sand was hollowed away looks like a miniature canyon, horizontal striations of brown sediment. One of those red dogs splashes through the creek and walks two feet from where I sit but will not stop to say hello. My best friend at Brown is a dog named Murphy who hangs out in the Creative Writing building. Behind me is marsh and behind that a dense row of trees, forest almost. Behind that a broad sweeping deserted lawn that forms a shallow bowl overlooking the bay. A distant duck or goose floats. Driftwood is coated in sand. Stones, sticks, a feather, broken shells, a bit of plastic, the cotton scrap of a cigarette butt. A fragment of brown glass burns amber in refracted sunlight. Wish you were here.