

# Headswim

by Frank D. Moore

I head south in the summer,  
stretch out in the sun  
till I am pressed down  
so next to the earth I  
see my own face  
and hear a friend's echo:  
"You used to look like a movie star."

In New Orleans, I dive  
into streets,  
hold oysters on my tongue,  
feel their pulsing.  
I wake in a room  
to a caged dog rattling the bars,  
a man's body browner  
than my own thrown  
across me. I drink.

Dawn on Royal Street comes  
through laced iron;  
I think of Myrtle Mainous  
saying to my mother  
as they peeled peaches:  
"Anne, this heat gives me headswim."  
The down on her knees,  
pink as petals of mimosa.

Lake Pontchartrain in the sun  
is a mirror as we head  
north again.  
I want to risk my face  
to the water,  
cup magnolia blossoms in my hands.