of impact he felt all of his senses spring into life as if freed from dormancy, the lilac scent of her skin filled his nose, the smooth hairless feel of her thighs reminded him of the just born rabbits he’d found under his backyard shed last spring. Her lips tasted like school lunch peach cobbler. He couldn’t shake the sensation of the ballpoint pen rolling across the pad of his index finger. He found himself trying to re-imagine the way her face looked, nose up toward the stars, wide eyes staring at constellations. She knows ‘em by name, he thought.

He started driving back to the spot late at night, after the good girls had gone home or down under the football bleachers to make out with their boyfriends. He liked to crank up the tunes, mix more of the whisky into his bottle of cola, rod the Monte Carlo down the dirt road that led to the lake and turn a cookie in the parking lot by the swimming beach. He liked to watch the dust fly up like a halo of brown smoke around him. That afternoon he’d dug in his mother’s shoebox of lipsticks, hoping to find one that smelled like peach cobbler. He’d driven past the Taste-E-Freeze where the tables were empty. He’d gone to The Swarm with some buddies, and had sat in the back of the Brookville Cinema where they’d taken pulls from a flask. When they drifted out of the theater that night, the summer seemed to embrace Ronnie. He was just drunk enough to want to keep going, and after he’d dropped his friends off at their houses he’d run a red light on his way out of town. But there’d been no one to see him. He kept taking pulls from the flask down the highway and down the dirt road to the lake. He thought he was almost there when he saw the big bug destroyed on the windshield, bright juices and inards staining his view. Then he blacked out, licking his lips, singing along with the radio, under the stars.