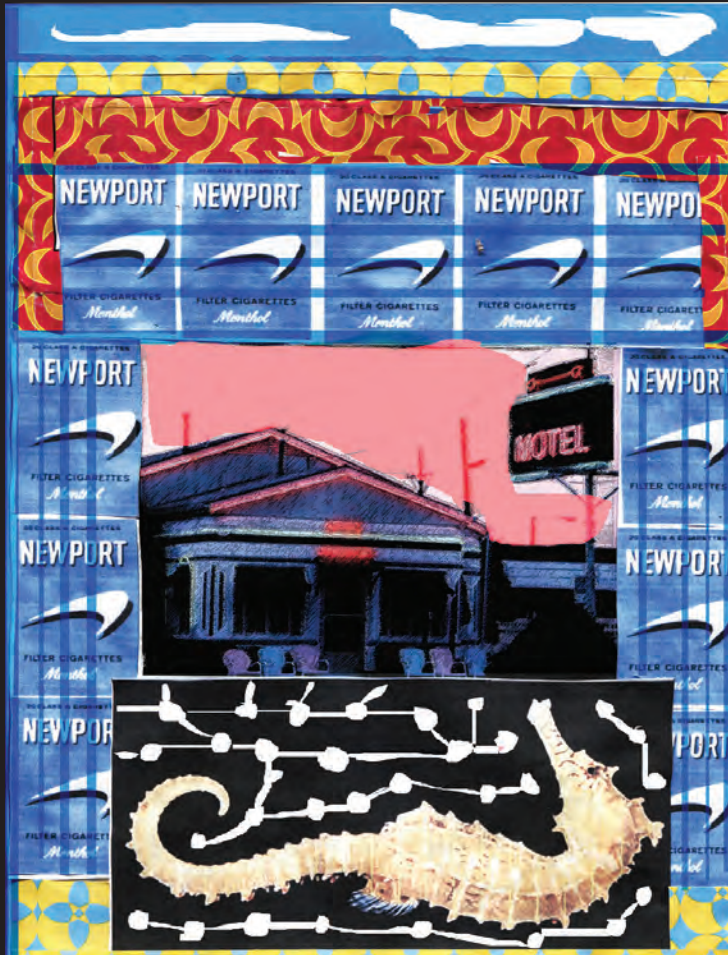


THE SEAHORSE MOTEL

My cousin taught me how to drink in a half-priced room at the Seahorse Motel with a handle of 151 and a liter of coke. He let the busted TV blast through walls while we chewed plastic cups and screamed, while we booze-dove from mattress to mattress. It was just the first drop, but that night I understood the clean thrill of waking sleep. We stumbled to the street to smoke our Newports, my spectral body teetering against the salted air. I loved him for what we shared, our mothers as nervous as purse-dogs, our fathers reticent, severe. We stayed awake all night, and when I finally blanked out, I dreamt there was no reason for all our meanness—just that half-kicked bottle.



Poet Rachel Marie Patterson is an editor at *Four Way Review* and the author of the chapbook *If I Am Burning*.

Artist Ira Joel Haber's work is in the collections of The Guggenheim Museum, The Whitney Museum and elsewhere.

Design by Debbie Nadolney

