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That May There Were Alligators in Green Lake

Angela Sorby

Marquette University, angela.sorby@marquette.edu

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The Seattle Aquarium rescued them
and nursed them as their skin dissolved,
eyes creamed, and Bayou smiles grew fixed
as DeLeon's fake map.
I remember the days before they died:
enclosed in my boyfriend's kitchen,
no job, hooked on the Seattle *Times*,
I sat stone-still in a river of reading
and slammed back Diet Cokes. Zoologists
deemed the gators dumped pets,
and I pictured them in a spit-warm bath,
staring at tile, their stub legs limp,
laying dead eggs on a lettuce leaf.
How did the first shock of Green Lake feel?
Like death, but quivering and limned
in milfoil, duck feathers, the lick of wind
through waves, a deepness, a reason to swim.