

## Three Poems · Sandra Nelson

### STOVES

On TV there was a movie where this girl loved someone; you could tell because she looked out the window all the time at dead trees and it was raining. She had blond Marilyn Monroe hair and she lived in an apartment, alone. The movie was black-and-white and real old because it had boa constrictors that squirmed on her face and wiggled by her eye when she cried so that we all laughed: me, Gary and Pam. This lady's boyfriend was in the war my grandpa was in because they both had matching hats in their pictures. Some guy brought her a letter and when she read it, she cried more. Then she looked out the window at all the little cars like shoe boxes floating in a river and the sun was shining on them. She went in the kitchen, turned on the stove, and died. This was how we knew the stove could kill you.

### WHEN SHE USED TO BE PRETTY

When she used to look pretty guys asked her out to the Starlight, 41 Twin, and Victory, the world's most beautiful drive-ins. They picked her up in primer grey cars to go tooling on the Ave before show-time.

In *Born Losers* these bikers smashed this guy's face on a VW windshield and you could see it like you were in the car. Man it was pizza time, crushed nuts, red-hot foot-longs and last-chance Dilly bars. Then she'd kiss the guy for awhile. Once a guy dropped his sour orange gum in her mouth. Another one made an anchovy burp right while he was frenching her. Sometimes she'd get one who grabbed at her tits, saying he couldn't help it, he's Italian or some shit like that. God, guys are such fucking pigs. Her mom told her to go out with all of them so she wouldn't miss it once she was married. "Miss what?" It seemed whenever she kinda liked one of them, her mom would say, "He's nice, but isn't he a bit greasy, or isn't his nose too big, think what your daughters will look like." "Right—my daughters."