

Grand Union

ELLIE ANDERSON

I have a photo of Daddy
in front of the Grand Union Hotel.
I had dragged him out of the bar.
He stood in the sunlight
blinking.

His arms crossed to close me out,
he looks annoyed. He left
a beer on the table.

He died a year later, leaving me
with no place to put my feet.

He came to me in dreams,
holding out his hands as if to placate me.

Twenty years later,
to the day,
to the hour,
I sat on a dock in the sun
watching light flicker over the water.
When I looked up, he walked toward me,
wearing his suit,
his hat with a feather in the brim.

He holds his hands out.
I am still alone,
still stumbling for a footing
but I am not ready to take his hand.
He smiles, and I let him go, again.