

**Driving to Work on a Thursday in October:
Tonight You will be Camping at the Coast**
Rachel Mehl

— ❧ —

I do not know if it is the way the clouds stretch
across sky like pulled batting.
or that this morning I'm drinking
coffee out of a paper cup
but I'm still haunted by Monday's visit
to the daughters of my grandfather's widow.
Though he died when I was three they offered
to sell me a cemetery plot next to him for \$800,
gave me his birth and death certificates,
his army discharge and reenlistment papers,
a gold ring with a triangle around a flame,
Lauren Gristy Mehl carved inside, too loose for my finger,
too small for yours. It could be too, the music
from the mixed CD you burned for me how it makes me feel
so human. *Meta loved dancing with Gristy at the VFW,*
they told me. Tonight you will sit in the sand,
with your buddies, drink spiced rum from a plastic bottle,
breathe in ocean and fire while I let the chickens out
and feed the cat. Yesterday, you looked us up
on Death Clock, told me I'll outlive you.
As the clouds compact, I know this:
we will have children. They will outlive us.
They will listen to this music when we are dead.