

# *Sketch*

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## Grand Slam Blues

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# Grand Slam Blues

*By Beth Trafton*

He sits across from me, stirs his coffee into oblivion.  
Smoke pours from his flared nostrils, pools onto the table, a  
dragon's snarl.

The tip of my press-on punctures the lid of a tiny creamer  
and I watch it bleed  
as heavy clouds of Marlboro swirl into ivory streams growing  
in front of us.

I light another cigarette, ash it into an empty coke can.

The emeralds of his eyes, a sparkling void, his smile a porno.  
He sits and reads the newspaper. Black, white, and red all over.  
On the wall a spider curls its fangs and drains the life of a fly  
as I sit here and drink my coffee like an emotional foreigner.