

River Goddess

Sean Ahern

She was made
under sheet-metal-sky
and milk-jungle.

Where children
wash in jade
pools with river fish.

Where sticky-salt-air
clings to cave
rainbow stairs.

Where at night she would
wade the river street of kapchai
to watch her mother dance
at the GoGoHookah,

below cool neon
Heineken signs,
she learned to wear
her body right.

Where her husband sells
lok-lok and buddhas
at a stall for tourists
across from an Irish pub —

where she left him and lied,
dove-to-ocean,
pretending where
she was from.

She told me,
water forgets,
the ghost-of-it, the dream-of-it
lingers until it fades

I asked her to stay,
She told me I'm nice
She told me I'm Irish she told me who I was
at the edge of my bed as she dressed,
the night I never saw her again.