

On the Half Shell

by Tobey Crockett

We rode low in the water – I had forgotten
that the sound of wavelets,
lapping and slurping in my ears, could be so
delicious.

The small motor chugged us over to the oyster rafts,
multiple docks popping and locking with the
hip hop chop
drummed up by the breeze passing over.

The fresh smells of seaweed, salt and spray
cleared our palates.
The sight of lemon wedges holding down
paper plates
made my mouth water of its own accord.

We were getting the VIP treatment thanks to
memories, my great-grandfather's name still opening doors
and oysters,
which emerged from icy chests tucked away on the deck.

Such sweet sea fruits
awash in the brine of the bay,
creaming butter-like across my tongue,
and yielding juices like a mermaid's table grape –

I remembered what it was like to be Venus
eating oysters on a sunny day, in Spring.