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## Seascape with Italian Bicycle Cap

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## SEASCAPE WITH ITALIAN BICYCLE CAP

After three or four days, the island seems to grow beyond its seven miles, and I'll begin to have a hard time remembering what its name means in Indian. There'll be a trawler working the horizon and suddenly close to my right forearm will be the deep green silences of wild grape vines in the old orchard back home. Or as the pelicans fly past, one of them will rear back on its wings, beak pointed straight down at the water, and then plunge heavily yet buoyantly into the sea, with a last second turning of its body before entering, as if far back in the solid brain it knew exactly the principle of the auger. Maybe the woman will be bobbing offshore on the yellow raft and waving excitedly as I feed cheese crackers to the gulls. Sometimes the noise it makes, especially when the wind comes from the northwest, is like the collapsing sound of a coil-spring toy progressing stupidly down step after step. Still, I study the rigs of the campers or watch until I am dizzy the roll of the *Blue Raider* coming in, its mate fileting flounder or blue. Or my eyes return to the white breasts of the nude girl lying by the wooden storm fence. I try not to think of anything, but as I am letting some sand sift through my fingers, I think of a photograph, circa 1947, of my sister and the man she would marry. They are leaning against a metal railing and behind them is the Pagoda that sits on a hill above the mills and outlet stores of a Pennsylvania city. Suddenly, it's as if the light forcing its way under the small white peak of my Italian bicycle cap needs only a few more inches of salt air or memory to turn what's left of the week into a sudden explosion of small black flies that bite deeper and deeper and eventually force us off the sand and back along the causeway and clam flats where the Louisiana heron muddies the water with their comic open-winged feeding dance.