

PUT ANOTHER DIME IN THE JUKEBOX, BABY

by Janet Ruth

I love . . . the New Mexico desert. Standing on the sandy floor left by the Cretaceous, here on the bottom of the Western Interior Seaway, nicknamed “Hell’s Aquarium,” I wish for rain. Drenched in images of giant plesiosaur fossils, ammonites and a *rock lobster* in the dried-up *octopus’s garden*. All the seasons in the desert. Spring scours us with *dust in the wind*, howling in from Arizona. *If I had a hammer*, it would be the sun that slams down on June. By late July, monsoons thunder in on the galloping hooves of *the horse with no name*, leaving behind damp smells in *the sage*. From *Río Grande mud*, cooler temperatures rise, and the cottonwoods of autumn paint a *yellow river*. In longer nights I stand beneath *a sky full of stars*. The earth turns toward winter solstice, just in time for the Geminid meteor shower. I wait for the first *shooting star* and other *unusual occurrences in the desert* before going to sleep.

devil’s fishbowl
dreams of sea monsters
under the bed

* *Music credits for phrases in italics – the title (line from “I Love Rock & Roll,” Joan Jett & the Blackhearts); “Rock Lobster” (B-52s); “The Octopus’s Garden” (The Beatles); “Dust In the Wind” (Kansas); “If I Had a Hammer” (Peter, Paul and Mary); “The Horse With No Name” (America); “The Sage” (Emerson, Lake & Palmer); “Río Grande Mud” (album title, ZZ Top); “Yellow River” (Christie); “A Sky Full of Stars” (Coldplay); “Shooting Star” (Bad Company); and “Unusual Occurrences in the Desert” (The Grateful Dead).*

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