Recession

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Recession
by Stephanie Gorsek

My grandfather
once told me that
The Great Depression
taught him a lot about joy
and ironically
it gave him a lot of work to do.

I guess he has that alphabet soup to thank:
WPA and CCC and FDR
and ABC
and other alphabets
that come in three.

Somewhere,
past the roads
near a church
and tomato garden
was a park I went to
my whole life.

At six, I had a spitting contest
with a girl whose hair
was chain-link straight.
She won.

At eight, I was able to master
the monkey bars
the adult monkey bars
the ones that were taller
than a streetlight.

At twelve, I gained five pounds
from the atrocious amounts of ice cream
I managed to guzzle down
each summer
by the pool.

At sixteen, my hormones,
exploding like fireworks, 
craved only for the night 
and hide and go seek tag.

At twenty-one, I had to 
make up a story

on why the kiddie slide 
donned a shiny gold stain. 
And I was told 
to drink responsibly.

At twenty-six, she said 
yes 
and challenged me 
to another spitting contest.

She won.

At around . . . fifty-something 
I lost my job 
and tripped over a wordy stone 
in a small dense forest 
of the park.

At that moment, I remembered 
my grandpa.