

CACHE IN CONEY ISLAND

EMILY JANOWICK

While Knox and I wait at the shore's edge,
the sandy wet cuffs of our jeans blueprint our ankles.

Two men with metal detectors weave in and out of the thin water.
One in a wetsuit,
the other carries a shovel, digs
scattered holes down the beach,
a plastic bag
half-full of treasures.
I take three photos of gull footprints in dry sand, tiny triangles
bisecting one another,
a pattern
too ugly to even be wallpaper.

I always want to take things with me,
little round pieces of glass or sweaters on the side of the road,
purple cardboard.

I take three photographs of my old grey jeans,
their smudges of yellow paint,
leave them folded on the stairs that lead to the D train,
force myself to walk away.

When Knox finds a 12-gauge shotgun shell
in the twisted wood, straw,
I wonder why he sets it back down.