Winner of the 2017 Manuscripts Poetry Contest with Alessandra Lynch
Two puppies lay at my feet.
One brindle and striped like a tiger
The female is a lovely gray. It is she
that is striking. Her face so small, her legs like flappers.
she would be a beautiful dancer, but
how frightened of every little sound!
I took her out to the front yard and she heard wind chimes
and skirted back to the door—I took them out together once
til two pit bulls barked
and Luna dived under a parked car.
The first time
I coaxed her out with a treat. “Come here, baby.”
The second time, “Get the fuck out of that car!”
anonymous 231 said a man grabbed her privates on a subway (why do we use that word... ‘privates’...they are not private)
i was grabbed
he grabbed me
a schoolmate grabbed me in a classroom. In class.
30 people stood, all in groups, chatting uncomfortably. I can’t remember what I did. Why this boy laughed and reached out and touched—
cupped
no—
eah!
I yelped.

Potty training is better. I must softly pet them every time they go outside or they’ll forget themselves and pee inside. They’ve done it often. Tejunio will worry his eyes at me and meander to the door sometimes. I tried to rub his nose in it, and he bucked like a wild horse. Like I’d beaten him.
Women envision strange things:

A woman fantasizes she’s in love and gets married and has a thousand babies while juggling a career.

A woman fantasizes she is on a cruise ship and there is a murder and only she can solve it.

Occasionally a woman fantasizes she’s at home. Cooking. Or on the street, or at a frat house. And a man approaches her. A nondescript white man, age 22–30. A lewd request. A reaching out to touch. She whips out her gun and shoots him dead like Butch Cassidy or John Wayne. And the blood and the police come and she says breathlessly I’d rather go to prison than be Raped! And the jury acquits the brave young heroine.

But the boy’s last name was Cho. He wasn’t older. I couldn’t find my gun.
Puppies are doing well. They follow me, they drink when I drink, watch me use the bathroom, eat each other’s meals, chew up all my furniture and sprawl on my bed. Luna loves belly rubs. She spreads her legs and shows the world I call it her ‘teepee’ because it looks like a little Indian hut.

I fight this strange urge to touch it— but my hand disgusts.

I can’t remember how they neuter females.