

CATHLIN NOONAN

Abortion Made a Road

How months earlier
I'd unzipped fleece,
laid belly-down
cheek-flushed on ice.

How in Queens at 82nd,
a center of road
smoldered so cold,
numbness thawed.

My palms, graveled
blood but for a scotch
of freeze. How I tongued
the puddle, concrete

through flesh. I rose,
shame-laced relief
for a taxi driver spared,
for the green chemical

dawn above Northern
towards the bridge.
How I train to anywhere.
How no would-be search.

How I could. Not be.
How I continued
past 37th & half-torsoed
barefoot mannequins

shivered in latex jeans.
Fluorescents twitched,
stores aglow, shuttered
within settled grates.

And Bleecker
to Mulberry, her leaves
fodder for silk fibers

I spin and latch
to each streetlamp
to Mott, block

apple named
for a butcher
to Planned Parenthood,

fruit tree made puree
made a pummeling
made a geography,

knotted with gauze,
thread woven through holes—
her grocers, her salted fish,

her mushroom hills,
her sweat-beaded geese
strung above lemons,

her steam, her dumplings
after work, her dwindle
of visitors & tightening lanes

& secret curves
& doorways to tunnels,
her smell, gamy and pearled.