

The Long Island Railroad

delivers me after your mourners leave
for cake in the parish hall and dirt
from your grave leaves shadows
where I've swiped my eyes.

This is the church where we met,
two girls in pleated skirts, giggling
behind nuns with habits too rigid to bend.

The island still wears its strange perfume—
salt, seaweed and creosote, weather-worn
dock splintered into suntanned thighs.

We watched ferries score the bay, laughed
through the burn of strawberry wine.
You wondered where my sun would set,

no surprise I landed in the mountains,
driven by the songs we sang, your Mustang
screaming along with Rocky Mountain Way—
high, high, so high we'd shout every time.

All the years I wandered, we remained bound
like rubber ball to wood, I stretched
the band thin, you held the paddle tight.

And now this—

you've exchanged your blankets
for this shroud of sand and silt

left me untethered

no one here to bring me home.

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