Asphalt

Ari Brander

I awoke lying on a wet bench at a bus stop. Spine stiffened to the teeth of its steel bars to the copper pipes of my deserted train of thought. I sat up, back buckling, croaking, cracking, drenched, at a bus stop.

(miles down fading tracks, certainty carried promises of her being here forever)

I sat confused, bitterly quivering at a train sta—I mean, bus stop. No yearning to clock out or dawdle, gaze carried by telephone lines. No thirst for the solace in moving parallel to, yet removed from the clicks and clamor.

Between echoes and illusion I paced back and forth strung by no fugitive desires nor such to rest my feet no longing for a lover (dampened socks, dry coin pouch, penniless mouth).

I was at a bus stop.

I was at a bus stop where the trai—I mean the bus

Author’s Note: The poem emulates the dissociative in-between of my mother dying and me finding out. Even though my senses were telling me something terrible had happened, her death still hit me like a bus.