

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.