

Blackstone Avenue

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You wanted to move through life
that way, on roller skates,
to matter the way lightning matters,
the way the woman on the poster,
all lips and sequins, matters,
to matter like an explosion
of imitation stars
on the darkest night in July.

When you roller skate
down Blackstone Avenue,
past all the yields,
past all the stop signs,
sooner or later, you smack
into something, like a billboard maybe,
and all that's left is the shape
of that cartoon creature,
arms outstretched,
a cutout, an outline of self.

Where do you start to fill it in?
How do you collect features
and face? You start, I think,
by slowing down, by listening,
even if you can't do more
than place your ear
against the asphalt.
In time, you will be able to find
your legs again, and although
at first, they may feel
more like water than like flesh,
they will carry you.

