

My Twenty-Ninth Year

I used to be part of a group of women who hived
every Tuesday, passing

small explanations
of anything but

America between them. Dogs touched
the ground. They were old,

older, nested and done
with life's jostled questions. I drove

an hour, the sun branching
my face through the dashboard
to listen to the loafing of jasmine and the women

who tended their ease. I remember

they wore sweaters
with ribbons. We went in and out
with our needles. The silver

settings gushed light on doiled tea tables. The houses
fringed in precise shrubs. You'd think

I would be bored, pressed inside
such careful affable people. But I dwelled in that and learned

parked ritual, such this and that and systematic time for every sort

of slowing. Though, yes, I always drove off
fast, tires slapping asphalt like horses, rushing
through windwreck to a shelter where I hadn't yet
erased suggestions of children, where I only
knew perfectly happy. Week after week,
I drove to the women, each wheel rounding
ground with its schemes,
my one self never thinking about the roots or the field
we all get to, just getting there, just going awhile.