

"In Retrospect"
Caroline Bybee

In Retrospect
All of my rag dolls
have buttons for eyes.
They can't see
so I do it for them.

At the grocery on the corner
we buy six airheads
for \$1.08
they're pink and sticky
pressed against our gums.

I didn't move out of the way of the police car -
no one answered my mother's 911 call.

The radio is in another language.

While you peel the onions,
I sit on the counter beside you
and bump my heels
and cry.

There are egg whites

dripping down my fingers
and you're holding the yolks:
we're making a cake

We pulled up fistfuls of papers;
we're going to save the world.

And we tip-toed over fallen telephone wires
with duct tape on our mouths

The lemon trees are bearing fruit
and when we forget to pick it,
it will rot on the ground.

I cut my palm on a serrated bread knife
you asked me
how that could have been an accident

The music of my nightmares is jazz
and we are drinking off-brand colas.

I have a neighbor.
He left his car lights on.

The city buses run until midnight.