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Ashley Caspermeyer Poetry

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A Bop for Worship in Paved Parking Lots

The Lord's Day is for service
spent reciting the Hail Mary, short
and sweet as me at eight years old.
My tiny hands, clasped in practiced prayer,
ask a mother to protect me from sins
I have not committed yet.

We follow the lines we're taught to obey.

The Lord's Day is for food
shopping after Sunday morning mass.
I thumb the circular scripture that covers
my mother's purse as our steps shuffle behind
the procession. Each patron presents their offering
to the cashier, clipped coupons in their open palms.
The payment they give each week for a meal
that will feed the souls of the hungry.

We follow the lines we're taught to obey.

The Lord's Day is for returning
abandoned shopping carts to their flock.
Outstretched metal arms welcome back
their own, saving each one from becoming lost
beyond the yellow curb. Lines drawn so they know
not to venture beyond their intended purpose.

We follow the lines we're taught to obey.

Pilot Light

in my mouth
accelerant
flushed cheeks
the color red
breeds in me
purge it—
an absent beat
life I've let die
a glowing flame
flickers still
as Mama made me
fuel to the fire
I thicken—
to feed the earth
because I was made
a viable host
open like a furnace