

Street Work Ahead

The night they paved Somerville Avenue
its denizens crowded the sidewalks
with their lawn chairs, icy adult beverages
sweating through brown paper bags,

trash cans filling with broken glass.
It was still over ninety degrees,
in the darkness bloomed the evening's
entertainment—workers in glowing vests,

cops with wands conjuring up cars
from side streets and alleys, traffic backed up
all the way to Cambridge, detour signs
tipped over, students clamoring

to Tuesday bars. In this benevolent parade
buildings were still hot to the touch,
summer lived in their brick
and mortar, but mostly it was in

the asphalt laid down by dump truck,
feeding the paver all of the midnight
it could handle, escorting it like a bride
at a wedding, or a widow at a wake.

I felt so alone when I first started walking.
The gargoyles outside the Davis Square
train station had glared at me,
their faces contorted by the pinch

of lips gripping cigarettes.
But by the time I got home, I was
a celebration, a doffed party hat, a dawn
surfing the flawless unlined road

while worker and citizen and student slept.
Dawn had blonde hair and a tan, on this
unmarred road, we felt like this
could last forever.