

Lynne S. Viti

Murphy in August

Those without air conditioning in the dog days
found shelter in the neighborhood movie houses,
or strolled around the ice-cold mall.
On such a night we collected you from the bus station,

fresh from your years in Freiburg—
long-haired, bearded, last off the bus,
you schlepped your backpack and your guitar,
joining us for one last party.

By the time you came to Baltimore,
we were cutting our hair, dressing for success.
You were the last to dip your toe into adulthood,
traded your busker's license for a programmer's desk.

That humid night the 'Sixties were over,
the 'Seventies half gone. The moving sidewalk
didn't care who was left behind. You hopped on—
to a job, marriage, two kids, and a 401 k.

Lynne Viti is the author of *Baltimore Girls* (2017), *The Glamorganshire Bible* (2018), and *Going Too Fast* (forthcoming 2020), Finishing Line Press, and *Dancing at Lake Montebello* (forthcoming 2020), Apprentice House Press. She was awarded Honorable Mentions in the WOMR/Joe Gouveia Poetry Contest (2018, 2019), and was nominated for the Mass. Book Award in 2017 and 2018.