

“They Called Me Mayer July”

I miss the street.

Stickball stoopball, dodgeball, baseball – pinkies!

I miss Linda, the ump, cheering

From the sideline – “Take third, take third!”

Fighting over jacks, boys, dolls.

I miss my skates, ratcheting the curved cup

Over unscathed sneakers.

Metal wheels scratching sidewalk

Skate key secure in my pocket.

I miss the dogs

And being feral.

I’m lonely for exploring

Abandoned houses, dusty lots.

I miss the streets and hanging out at Zeke’s

Furtive check of mirror, boy-sightings reason for the day.

I miss my bike and Mona holding onto back fender

Roller skates lifting off pavement as we flew down Forest Hill.

I miss the frozen lake where

Freedom was a wild ride downslope

Skating with no rink, no piped in music

Skating to an inner beat, trusting

Thick crust of ice.

I miss fifteen and not caring

Who or when or if to marry.

I miss drop-in’s and getting stoned and

long phone calls about nothing.

I miss before when I was dreaming of after.