

## Lynne S. Viti – Two Poems

### New London, Seen from a Train

Burnt-out holes that used to be windows  
stare from a blackened brick structure.  
*INN* proclaims a sign on the ground floor.  
The boarded-up windows are blinded by plywood.  
School buses line up in a parking lot under hazy sun  
then between the pilings of two companion bridges  
the gray water comes into view.  
Graffiti adorns a concrete abutment,  
and moving away from the city you see  
backlots of strip malls and cinderblock buildings.  
Ice is freezing on the ponds. Not a human in sight  
only an untended landscape.  
In the bare trees, balls of sticks—  
deserted nests—balance on dormant branches.

### Navigation Systems

I got lost in the grocery, wandered away—  
I couldn't have been more than three.  
I ran up and down the aisles looking for my mother  
in her white sundress with cherries dotting the fabric.

It's so easy to turn a corner  
then realize you have no idea where you are.

My first day in Manhattan I took the subway  
uptown to West 116<sup>th</sup> but when I climbed the stairs  
up to the sidewalk I saw I was east  
of Morningside Park, I'd been warned  
not to walk there. It was daytime, Sunday—  
I felt the adrenalin rise in my body.

Before navigating Boston in my VW Beetle  
I had to study a map, mark my route in red pen.  
I learned to navigate around Fenway on game day,  
which streets led to cul-de-sacs, which had fewest lights.

Sometimes I'd pull over, roll down my window,  
ask a pedestrian for directions. I drove Brookline to Quincy,  
Cambridge to Charlestown, Jamaica Plain to Dorchester—  
I don't drive unfamiliar roads at night now

without a navigator, not the gps voice  
but a pal with better night vision,  
someone more familiar with the route.

I look at the calendar and see  
I have no more time to be lost.

**Lynne Viti's** poetry appears in *Welcome to the Neighborhood, You Can Hear the Ocean* and *A Lovely Place, A Fighting Place, A Charmer: Baltimore Anthology* (forthcoming, June 2022). She is the author of *Dancing at Lake Montebello: Poems* (Apprentice House Press 2020) and two poetry chapbooks, *Baltimore Girls* (2017) and *The Glamorganshire Bible* (2018) from Finishing Line Press. Her second full-length collection, *The Walk to Cefalù*, is forthcoming in Fall 2022 from Cornerstone Press/Portage Poetry Series. A lecturer emerita at Wellesley College, she teaches in community programs and leads poetry workshops in the Boston area.