

No one can boast

by [Tania Runyan](#) in the [March 22, 2011](#) issue

On the tollway just south of Kenosha
spring sets the boarded-up porn store ablaze,
topaz dousing the peeling paint,
the harp-notes of ice on the gutters.

On the embankment home geese gather
in the mud-slush. Tractors lift their beams
to the rising temple of a new overpass.

I outlasted winter, four months rumpled
under snow. On Christmas we woke
to a broken furnace, the baby's fingers
carrot-stick cold. One night I skidded
off the patio steps. Most mornings I stared
out the window, wondering how far
I'd driven my life in the ground,
asking the darkness how much longer.

I kill the radio. Just the hum of the motor,
the pitted road, my slow, steady breath
like the syllables *Yah, weh*. I didn't work
at this joy. It just appeared in the splash
and shine of I-94, as suddenly as these Frisbees
and sand buckets in the roadside yards
laid bare by the shrinking snow.