

PICNIC ON THE FREEWAY

Paul W. Minx

I am forced to think of the elemental,
the compulsion for a quick, nourishing

lunch. Did I say death?
Why are they sitting off the freeway's shoulder,

a composite American family—father, mother, son—
unpacking cold chicken among the lupine and
hubcaps?

Oh, you praisers of concrete!
Oh, you followers of the shortest distance home!

Do you also count among your cult,
Mrs. Inez Gutierrez, who tossed her baby

off a Hollywood Freeway overpass into the
rush hour traffic?

“Baby bounced three times,” a drunken spectator
said,

“before it was hit.”
The only car I ever owned was a black '63 Rambler

named Judy (now in Jack's auto graveyard,
where WE MEET BY ACCIDENT).

After that dumbfounding wreck, still animal,
in awe of life, I lay down

on the warm, moonlit asphalt.
I curled up in a ball.