

**Alexis Green**  
**July on 18th Ave**

“Summertime shootout”—  
A phrase as sad as the wheel still spinning  
From a fallen body’s last bike ride  
A phrase as hefty as cookout to-go-plates  
And house music

The side of summer  
That lived on the numbered streets  
Always asked our mothers if we could play outside  
Because if we would’ve asked she would’ve said no

And as we ran through the front door,  
Our shoestrings still loose,  
We didn’t know if we were entering a game  
Of hopscotch or Russian roulette,  
But we ran anyway,

Hoping the ice cream truck would pull up  
Before the drive-by—  
The sound of “Fur Elise”  
The only thing that could distract us  
From the sound of gunshots

Summertime on our side of town:

Where water-ice  
And brown bodies  
Melt at the same speed

Where the butterflies in my stomach  
Didn’t know whether to dance or duck  
But they knew to stay ready to bust a move

And every year we still looked forward to it  
Because even if our first kiss was with the concrete  
You’ll never forget the last time  
That the body was warm.