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## Way Past Exit 31A

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## Way Past Exit 31A

*Jillian Gormley*

It's really a shame that you missed out  
On the free fireworks last Thursday night.  
We watched the gold, and pinks, and oranges burst  
And fall towards the very tips of the waves,  
Then fall again as the waves smashed  
Against the sand.  
During the finale we bought ice cream-  
None other than Kohr's orange and vanilla swirl,  
And drove back to my house with the windows halfway down.  
The air was thickened with smoke.  
But as we drove down past 16<sup>th</sup> Ave,  
We could smell and taste the fresh salt.  
The midnight breeze always makes its way through my window.

You were pacing back and forth in your room  
Surrounded by reminders of the future.  
One day  
You see it, yourself with a stethoscope around your neck.  
But you can no longer remember what the ocean tastes like.  
You want to sleep because what you see when you're awake  
Is a white wall-  
Empty and blank, with no picture frames-  
No meaning.  
What's behind it is even worse-  
A city that never sleeps.  
What will happen to your dreams, the ones that really mattered?  
Remind me why you're traveling to this place,  
Staying up late into the night.  
Because the lights are so bright,  
Your eyes are brought back to the empty house that you live in.  
The walls scream,  
Hey, you chose this life baby.  
The mirror yells,

You cannot look away.  
So stand there and cry  
Realize you still have time  
And  
Wipe those pathetic stares, swollen eyes,  
Before your tears spill into your “I <3 NY” coffee cup.  
Even the smallest waves still crash for you.