

MALCA LITOVITZ

Hopscotch

when cummings wrote about it,
it sounded like a lot of fun:
bettyandisabel, the sun always shining.

i've known springs like that,
nomi and i eating brie cheese,
notebooks open on our laps

but on my street, i was the odd person out,
the one you didn't seek when you told her to hide,
the sissy whosc tocs you stepped on,
her shoes frail pink.

one day, jillandjoni played hairdresser with my long braids,
filling them with weeds,
hiding my ring in the sandbox.

my memory of those games is discoloured,
a ball bouncing on the brick wall:
"ordinary movesies, laughsies, talksies."

going through the motions,
never feeling what the others must be finding.

"one, two, three, alara,"
alley cat marbles, bruised knees.
childhood relics fill me with unease,
so when does hopscotch begin?