

Hot Wheels

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Strong sun, bold, white,
blasting down on me, the small, black figure.
Kick and kick, I coast through the sad picnics,
Empty formalities, appreciating nature.

A dog chases a stick.

I sail through the park, my tail whipping victoriously in the wind
Once ashamed, I no longer hide my deformities.
I was born a bomb baby, the product of panic during nuclear war.
A nine month gestation, soaking in radiation
I came out all wrong.
My spine, an impossible arch,
a protruding crescent of puzzle pieces
forced to fit.
My hands, gnarled claws curl into my wrists.
Inept extremities.
My dry, cracked skin, blistered and bloody falls off my body,
red wafers of dermis.

I am a vibrant injury.

The curious shouts of the pickled neighbor children,
all denim and Band-Aids, hang like chimps from jungle gyms,
their sheltered eyes, heavy-lidded, weighted with privilege,
cannot separate the suede of my rollerblades, red,
from my crimson skin, scored with scabs.

I read their faces like desperate billboards.
I know their musings, their disdain.
Their benighted little brains,
so quick to judge, don't bother me.
I know my place in life, I know my destiny.
They'll work boring jobs for grueling hours
and I'll be known nationally
as Hot Wheels, the first mutant champion
to grace the Roller Derby.