

River Trace

North of the West North Broadway Bridge,
under the access to 315,
huts in a half moon faced the river,
ringed by a low wall of trash.
Evenings in 4000 B.C. hawks floating home
to high trees saw a crescent
of small fires, over the heads
of wood-mice drifted
notes of a two-stringed gourd. A woman
with a Siberian face, color
of the oak leaf at her heel,
notches a bone with another day, the child
at her elbow idly kicking fire-lit dust
on the fire. Does she
think about time, know they'll leave nothing
but the flint in her hand, a trace
of red ocher in filled holes? Her dead
are buried near her, outside the fire,
and tied. Or is it still—water, night,
her own hand—only eternity
she knows? Even now
there's a patch left, not quite covered
with fill, flooded and left, flooded and left.