**Sidewalk Vegetable and Fruit Stand on Reade and Chambers, 1980**

Norma Bradley

From my loft window I watch you place

one plum at a time on your stand,

until the last one rests at the top of the pyramid.

You treat zucchini, carrots, oranges

as if they are honored guests.

Your white shirt and trousers cover your trim body.

Ten hours each day you stand on concrete,

greet customers,

keeping order, making change. At dusk, each leftover

goes back into a crate, placed on a conveyor

descending into the dark, tucked in

for the night like children.

One afternoon I watch a tall broad-shouldered man

hold a mango, inspect it, flip it in his hand,

fire it toward your face, spit names as he runs.

You hold your bloodied jaw,

blood pooling on your whites,

fall back onto a now bloody crate.

I run down thirty-three steps, carry ice

from my freezer, kneel down.

My eyes meet yours.

You place the ice, head bowed.

Days later—under my door

I find a snip of white paper.

*Please come supper with my family*

*Nom Wah restaurant 13-15 Doyers Street*

*Sunday 5pm, please*