

JULIA LISELLA

## Road to Radiation

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Lift the latch, open the door  
or let me do it for you.  
And ease into the passenger  
seat beside me. Guide me out  
the skinny driveway to protect  
the browning lawn on either side.  
At the street we dip below the curb. A car  
I didn't see honks and swerves  
around your white four door  
you've let me drive. You are not disturbed.  
*Be careful.*

I didn't see.

*Yup. Yup.*

As I steer  
us further into Queens, along the parkway  
out to Nassau county, your side-way shortcut  
you know every pothole  
up, down, around, through.  
The intersection, a five way deal,  
takes long minutes. We pass through.  
At the medical building where  
no one lives the gay nurse  
says hello. A receptionist  
writes your name down. I pick up a magazine  
to read about cancer. Put it down.

Take out my Mina Loy. Incomprehensible.

You read

*I cannot imagine anything less disputably respectable than prolonged  
invalidism in Italy at the beck of a British practitioner*

over my shoulder

and ask me to explain

what I think it means.

Note: Lines from Mina Loy, "Italian Picture" in *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*.