

Mall Flower

by Tina Barry

I've blown out my shag haircut
and it's big.
BIG-big. Cool

With the mirrored halter-top
and jeans chopped into shorts.
SHORT-shorts.
I'm psyched for the mall

And its food court, where I strut
the aisles on swizzle
stick legs
past Jahn's green whipped cream,
past Beefsteak Charlies,
past the crepes at Magic Pan,
past the Nut Shoppe's chocolate
turtles

To buy cigarettes at Mr. Pipe
where Scott wears an afro
and a star of David,
ties a red bandana
to the loop of white overalls,
and asks me to meet him
behind Cinnabon
where I wait, back pressed
against cinderblocks,
face tilted to the sun,
knowing, as I suck
the smoke in deep,
that I'm a fox.
A total fucking fox.

