

## CONFESSIONS

Li Yun Alvarado

*What do you think about abortion?*

I wonder if Mami thinks this is about me,

an amusing idea (I have not had sex  
in years). *I almost had one*, her answer;

I cannot not look at her.

I might not have been

here to look at her. She was so young.

I almost understand.

But, no, this is not about me.

She is talking about my sister.

*Tu abuela talked me out of it,  
said she would take the baby, raise it*

*until we could afford both of you.*

When she was born,

my parents could not send her away,  
not even for a year, like they had with me.

Not again. Instead, they government-cheesed  
our lives into some kind of normalcy,

and only sent us to la isla  
for summer vacations.

As Mami drives,  
I remember another story.

I once teased abuela,

*Un día escribiré*

*el cuento de tu vida.*

She laughed then started

her whispered confession. The husband.

The one before Abuelo. The first child,

and then almost another.

The backroom. The blood.

The sister who cared for her after *se lo quito*.

*Does Mami know this story?*

Maybe it wasn't just Abuela's

Catholicism that had given me

LI YUN ALVARADO

my little sister. I think about how  
abortions must skip

a generation.

But this is not about me.

I cradle their confessions  
and will give my sister *that* money

I cannot not deny her—  
she begged me with tears.