

Abrasion

"For without shoes, my feet become shoes..." –Brenda Shaughnessy

I am a callus. The surface
where my skin meets the world

has grown resistant;
just as road begets roadrash,
erosion is just another name for path.
My life was a blister but I popped it
and taped it up. Now it's leaking

through the bandages, now sticky gauze, soiled dressings,
now neosporin. Now sore and tender. Did I say I was callus?
That might be a stretch-mark
on my keratin aspirations. Without shell, I am the shell

but I am also the belly, full
of myself, round and grumbling.
Without shoes, I cannot run from that.