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HORIZONS OF UNDERGROUND AUTUMNS

A woman's eyeglasses sticky with heat mountains in October.

The only leaves changing color
marooned on trees caught
in stormy polaroids.

Live autumns of underground sunsets.

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The man who chopped down the sky
has no heritage,
no voice.

The weak weather formations he slept with were only on paper.
Rumors mostly.

The more severe rainfall suggests other cities
arranged in piles of rain.

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Someone will be selling cattle children raised alone
on the lunar farms of e-bay.

Someone will lose all connections to winter.

The moon that acknowledged him
stalked into the sewer by deer who've already been prayed for.
Prayed for and flayed.

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Fill your sores with couscous.
Eat at local shoe slaughters.

We can buy water that's been melted down
to what's beneath water.

We can recall what's never been said,

the glinting of cellophane meat
at the A&P,

ketchup and violence and fecal melt
arranged at the Burger Bed

for less than a dollar, less than the fallout
and the alcohol fires from which
the faces on dollars are made.

**WORLDS OBSCURED IN THE SHADE
OF YOUR BREATHING**

Even in your shallow meditation
the untraceable silence of breath
entering and then leaving you

causes moons to blow away
from the windows in a city built
with the shadows you've lost

and the lights at the bottom of a haiku,
lights that hurt only on the sides of buildings
and the places they've disappeared.

And outside its range of cicadas
crying for their emptiness,
a computer left in the trash has dreams
where sometimes you exist,
and where sometimes there is just wind and trees.

INFINITIES OF LIVES IN OUR INTERIOR GALAXIES

Christmas lights falling
asleep behind the child's mouth.
The wind blinking in his belly.
"When he lived Bert was
nice to me," the boy says
to his blurred father,
as if he knew from the first minute
that snow falls only in the smallest animal.

"Whenever I try to cut a new day
from the brown notebook, it leaves
little sounds of blood," the boy tells
his mother and the one inside his mother.
His whole life he will stand here
rusted to his eyes and his clothes
and will understand infinity,
the sky's duration under the driveway ice.

The trees will keep lurking closer
with their knives. They will never reach
the cold parts of him where he's been
balanced for years on one strand
of moonlight. "Others have gotten lost
where I slept," he tells the deer
living in the silence they made in his head.
"Others will survive because no one
can find them," he tells his uncle
who searches for a life inside the warm deer.
His uncle who writes to him in blackout code,
out of reach, massive as a crow and afraid.

AFTER THE MYTHS OF HUMANS HAVE PASSED

The roots of ghost-legged
caterpillars keep the mountain

from drifting away.

The ants mining the ground
for warmth
gather in the shade
of a cobweb.

The ones who stopped moving
are still

a civilization. Spiders pause and drink
from a hole the moon lost

in a drop of rain.

Nothing to stop the wind
blowing daylight over the hills.

Something beyond the lightning
eats its own

cold mouth and the grasses
no longer bend
as if almost

dead or aroused or trying to whisper.

Led toward emptiness by the one who carries
the sun and moon
in his eyes, the turtles

collapse into a darker frequency

where no trees return
from their images
reflected on the shallow
beds of algae

and nothing hears the water getting smaller,

no devastation
remains.

TRACTOR HIGHWAYS BEYOND THE SKY

we move away and change
one letter in our name

and then move far away
from our names
altogether.

we build homes out of Ford Buffaloes
and mountains we've already
torn down,

and we paint the houses with onion grass
and our own plague sweat.

we talk mostly
about the pumpkin harvests
and storms left on the radio

and how the wind catches in our ponchos leaving
its thin hair and creosote stains.

we hope to find Menakam Kluyon
down the tractor highway
to the fringes of White River

and the open crawlspaces of the Los Angeles border towns.

we want nights easy enough to listen and pray
to the IGA trucks lost
out in the season's vulnerable crops.

we want water without feces
and games where one of us
will be told how to survive.

we want breakfast lunch dinner
eyesight that knows just enough.

we want to feel our way through
the universe cast by a scorpion's lamp with one person
we don't need to grasp for,

and we want to be lonely
with the children we forced
onto the land

and able to grow our own rain
and our own walls against

the whispering snails

and to bleed without harm
and sleep without consequence

wherever the slithering roads
fail to hunt us down,

wherever the smell of someone who doesn't exist
reaches the end of our rooms
imported from south of the sky
on the backs of blood-soaked armadillos.