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Small Town

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by Isabel Randolph

My haircutter chews bubblegum
inches above my damp hair.
The shorn strands fall
and she tells me about the blue lights in a dark sky,
whooshing in the air
“and I was even half-sober!”
So it has to be real.

The buzz of the espresso maker
fails to drown out his voice,
“And can we talk about poets
who read from their phones during open mics?”
The pet-peeves of graduate students
who drink cheap beer
and five dollar drip coffee.
I stare at the tip jar while he swipes his card.

Old Stan calls from the other street,
“Hey, did you change your hair?”
I wave and then duck,
so he’ll think I didn’t hear.
Sometimes I don’t even notice these details
about myself, let alone someone else.
“Well tell your mama I say hello!”
he calls before rounding the next corner.