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Three Poems

Kismet Al-Hussaini

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KISMET AL-HUSSAINI

C'est du gâteau, chère

I.

I is a nitrous cloud paling around a will,
of all rained-out circuses
the most exquisite, the least dreamed in.

Clones circulate beneath the bedsheets
like bees in a waiting room;
hidden cameras dub over the fizzy droning with static.

I stir a long cord into the silt and bow.

II.

September: yellow lights cluster the sidewalk.

Aura of leaves in your hair.

I pray nightly into gloved fingers
that good exposures develop in deep fog.

Your rainbow optics bristle like an anenome.

III.

It is simply a matter of politesse.

Fancy a doll tip-toeing behind you: you couldn't be more focused

than you are now.

A neon watermark glows on the ceiling;

your salty loops are the closest sirens.

My plaster missiles jingle out of sight.

Between Two Women

The clouds are out of ideas but the sky keeps heaving,
blue lines running pale, creases flattening out surrender.

We pass the note on the wrought-iron surface and unfold it,
reemerge years later to unbutton metal dresses and take roll.

The tried jokes dangle from midnight ceilings in provocative slips
And I stand on the corner at noon, crying into my purse
that counterclockwise is the witch's direction.

Who told me sarcasm dissolves sideways in the rain?

I found a dagger in silk, a tooth dangling from a tree,
And no one raises an eyebrow
when the clouds slide over themselves like thighs.

The only sound that lingers is the absence of cadence:
the minor seventh chord of a train
settling finely over concrete in a wide sticky mesh.

Like postcards flashed at the end of a movie

their eyes move from one beautiful scene to the next,
and this pitcher is the midpoint cut out of their gaze.
It sweats the cold sweat of a pregnant stomach on the iron
where you and I rearrange the pieces of the contract

behind the copper rain; scrying into it until the x is distorted
and our reflections are blurred in the scarring
of blue gardenia and twigs; our hands opening, closing,
like a metal valve around water.

Neon Romance on an Ice Floe

Leg of dawn, blue-petaled wheel,
the mailboxes are all either bashed
or iced in. Lacking address,
the director acts without regret
or commentary, mailing rusted pipes
stuffed with rosebuds and lavender
to an old lover, just to get a reaction,
one who, even then, doesn't respond.
Leg of dawn, what's so special about that steeple
where sparrows scatter into formation
like poppy seeds glued to a candle?