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Transience

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TRANSCIENCE

KALEY SCHUMAKER

I.

something in the darkening corners
by the shifting hostel bed
where the restless dump their baggage

II.

speaking through the wrinkles in his hands—
I drove his car for fourteen hours
the pills helped, he only charged me gas
like my company was some sort of payment

III.

mel carries more weight than any hitch I've seen
faded four feet of canvas bag—his prosthetic
like a wooden leg for staring, he suggests
Ulysses and you forget everything you should be doing

IV.

what do the Druid, Escapee, Yoga-Stripper
and Journaler have in common?
something about Patti Smith and frozen blueberries
but the Londoner showed his stab wounds instead

V.

when I was 26 I spent 9 months along a cardamom river
the weightless washed their hammered bowls and chanted
(the orality of) what would otherwise be lost.
sometimes I dream the colors of their silks for fear I will forget

VI.

realizing on the cold bench of the local park
gathered dirt from walking in wet socks kept broken
glass of the West Street turnpike from piercing soles
the dog walkers miss my comfort

VII.

hole in the bathroom ceiling
webs blend to peeling white
strands wave in the ebbs of steam
sniffing dog at the door

VIII.

“that’s a bit presumptuous”
he said from the owner’s kitchen
his voice echoing off nakedness
and eggshell walls
“where do they keep the fucking espresso cups”

IX.

the little birds, demons
in the hole near the bed frame head
“I’ll eat your Satan babies”
he’s a Viking of a morning person

X.

every house on the corner the same
baby-boy-shower blue
“our house is the blue one on the left,
sorry we won’t be there to greet you”