

Flashes

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Maybe it's grotesque
That I think of them like flashers.
No warning, unassuming,
Jumping out at you on the streets
Under the smothering gray of a trench coat
Until it's pulled back like a grand curtain,
And at first it shocks you so much that you don't know what you're seeing
Then you think it's funny how you're the one that feels exposed
And you can't help but look
And you have to force yourself to turn and walk away.

I have never been flashed in the proverbial sense,
No pervert in a trench coat waits on the streets for me (as far as I know)
So I don't really know if that's how I would react,
But I have attached this one metaphor to my flashes.
Not flashbacks although that's what they probably are,
They don't feel like flashbacks
They don't feel back. They are now. Still here. Never gone away.
They don't transport me, they consume me.
Eating away at me constantly, never taking too big a bite.

I think of flashes like lashes, too.
Burning and crawling on your skin
Still raw, barely scabbed over
And when they heal they will still always mark you.

They're flashes of lightning.
A storm you don't know is going to strike
Sometimes on edge, and sometimes off guard
When they bolt your heart thumps a little faster
They sprout branches in your veins where blood runs a little hotter
They're over so fast but you still see them after they're gone
Their fingers leave prints on the sky.

I don't know how to make the flashes go away
If it's possible to move on,
I can distract myself with this and that,
Or I can watch.
Sit, stay silent, don't blink, don't move,
Just watch as they rush past
Like wind brushes through a field
Rustling every blade of grass.
Staying still like that
My body passes through months in mere seconds.

They're fireflies,
Blinking in the darkness behind my eyes.
Raindrops,
Pricking my skin with cool whispers.
Words in my mouth ready to be uttered
Wriggling between my teeth,
Rolling over my tongue,
Waiting for a spark
A crack
A whack
A slap
A flash.