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Hymn to Death

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Hymn to Death

Nicole R. Schmidt

The sky parchment soaked in dying blue
with streaks of orange—
the heralding
of coming day.

And he sings, “Oh the glory that the Lord has made.”

The spectral hybridity of dawn awakens thought
fires sparks of fading dreams
and unconscious fears.

And he sings, “Oh the glory that the Lord has made.”

My friend Sufjan embraces me via radio waves
and fires my neurons
sends hunger and tears rushing to my bones.
he grabs me
makes me hold the hand of his first love
who stands by the window
in dull white winter light
and tells us that she has bone cancer.

And he sings, “Oh the glory that the Lord has made.”

My forehead pressed against hers
there is dead skin on her nose
grooves in her chapped lips
and the smell of dried sweat on her shirt.
Oh the glory that the Lord has made,
the bone shattering glory
the pink and purple glory of coming day—
this fleeting moment
of life
soaked in white winter light.