

[kingdoms]

By Matthew DeMotts

i.

there is a dignity in the rust and brick dust; there is a dignity. it lies in the courts of some abandoned factories on moonlit city limits. there is a nobility hidden behind the chain-link fences embraced by wanton grass and dandelions. there is a majesty in the sleeping fluorescent bulbs dangling like bats over varmint-trodden passages. in every chipped tile and every dry spigot and every tapestry of graffiti spread out beneath bombarded windowpanes there is a monarchy. there is a monarchy in the creaks and groans.

ii.

our coup began before dawn broke, after raucous drives in the rain. petrichor and darkling fog still clung to our noses with tenacity. we were piled into our makeshift war chariot, a tired sedan, belting out half-remembered shanties. we swerved through the gates and stormed the castle with bricks and bottles and baseball bats, glossy-eyed and smiling for war. we battered the porcelain thrones and sinks with our splintering louisvilles, shattered the mirrors with our brick missiles. every window was a target, every corroded pipe a monument to tear down. we stomped on the crusty needles of long-gone junkies and pissed on the walls and all the while laughed and hollered as we pillaged the kingdom. when the sun rose over the puddles, we had already disappeared.

iii.

there is a dignity in our pills and tablets; there is a dignity. it lies in the milk-soggy remnants of our morning cereal. there is a nobility hidden behind our forgotten moments and liver spots. there is a majesty in the looming bills and taxes dangling like bats over our bureaus. in every missing hair and every birthday candle and every broken promise there is a monarchy. there is a monarchy in the creaks and groans.