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Necropolis

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Necropolis

By Maggie Reagan

The day after you tell me you don't love me
I clean dead flies from below the windowsill.
All night, they rioted against the glass,
such swift, sharp lives spent straining
against that barrier, and now I sweep their shells
into a world they could not reach alone.

Once when it was raining outside,
you tucked the edge of a blanket
up around my shoulders as you passed

and now, as you walk away from me,
I'm wishing the wetness on my face
was nothing more than rain. I have not seen
an emptiness like this since the Merenid Tombs:
hammered doorways opening only onto sky,
strands of sun winding through the walls
as if to raise the wild dead, and nothing
but the corners of buildings left standing, centuries
old and crumbling, grass tufting along edges.

When there is lightning at night, when I am folded
into darkness and the sound of rain on the roof,
I still think of you.

In Ohio it's the first of November, and no souls
I can see rise from the earth
but a mist steams from the pavement, looping loosely,
like dead things dancing. Dust settles
softly below the window. I bend, touching,
then pull back, the particles, like light, clinging
too closely to my fingertips. In the empty hallway,
the ghost of your footsteps toll like church bells
as I brush the dust from my fingers and stand.