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## "After the Storm," "Full Moon, House Cats," "Nameless, Coffeeshop Woman," "Movement," and "We Leave Behind Footprints"

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## AFTER THE STORM

Split branches and a tossed deck  
of hackberry leaves dot our  
neighborhood street. Raindrops  
sprinkle city windshields and  
rest on hairspray-covered heads,  
fresh out of musty bedrooms.  
Lights out at the corner coffee shop  
where you left your yellow envelope on  
the community bulletin board  
and I bought a drink with cash  
to dump down the storm drain  
on my way out the door.  
Sirens moan over cellphones  
as we cuddle close under  
the bathroom door jamb.

## FULL MOON, HOUSE CATS

Thunder slams against the floor  
in concentric semicircles  
beneath the white, texture-less  
ceiling, nipping fur-covered  
haunches with snapping teeth, pulling  
up tan carpet loops behind  
open crescent claws, clipped short  
just last week, when you wrapped  
your teddy bear body around  
my taut wrist like a serpent,  
kick'd up t'ward my unshaven face.  
Tufts of black hair, dandruff, and  
neon-painted nail caps float down  
past your rolling ribcage, you  
two hot-lap the empty hallway,  
I run my pen on top of  
mountains, the scabbing trail bisect-  
ing my plumping cheek, and the  
moon closes yellowed eyelids  
behind the cover of clouds.

## NAMELESS, COFFEESHOP WOMAN

Aqua, turtle tank top  
and sagging milk bone  
bag of flesh  
drop khaki-clad hips  
into the corner seat  
by the stained, paisley couch.  
Bedrock mirror eyes  
keep my own set  
on the blank  
computer screen page  
when the tin rattle  
bell bounce sounds  
against the wooden doorframe,  
pulling city gasps  
into the murmuring storefront.  
Lion roar breaths bring tight this  
scoliosis spine set,  
not light, moon-moth flutters,  
but the tired transfer  
of an old acrobat, shaking  
shoulder weight around  
stiffening sockets  
in figure-eight ellipses  
against the thatched chair-back.  
Typewriter pupils  
demand the clacking  
of my nerve-sweat fingertips.

## MOVEMENT

At the mountaintop,  
we find a steady decline,  
shuffle fast our feet,

in the trench, keep our  
faces still behind the crag,  
hold our aching breaths,

on the trail, rest  
between the ladder and the  
rugged rock face climb.

## WE LEAVE BEHIND FOOTPRINTS

Footprints left pressed  
between the iced pines  
at proper salute  
behind Milwaukee  
snowbanks, where razorblade breaths  
cut cold against the  
bare skin of your neck, swollen ring finger tugging  
bastard hands under  
the fresh falling flakes,  
through the narrowest tree split,  
but we leave behind footprints.