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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.