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Equinox

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Equinox

by John Nizalowski

The day is equal to the night,
but the night will soon triumph
over the day. The sun sets as
the moon rises, full and bright
over the long blue line of the
mesa. Yet soon the moon will
begin to vanish, slice by slice,
dissolving into the greedy sun.

This is the autumnal equinox.
This is the long time of dying.

In an October memory, my
father sits in the garage, single
yellow ceiling light shining
from its suspended tin cone.

He gathers Japanese lanterns,
delicate, orange bulbs hanging
from green stems. They will
bring light to those they charm.

On the tube radio a quarter century
old, the World Series emits ghost
voices of a lost world—Baltimore
Orioles verses the Cincinnati Reds.

Inside the house, my mother heats
cider with cinnamon; outside, past
the open garage door, it is dark
beyond the spilled yellow light.

Crickets sing, the winter is coming,
the stars above are clear and bright.
An aurora builds below the horizon;
we will soon sleep under its glory.

All these moments are long gone
as I stand watching the moon rise
above the volcanic plateau. Only
the stars are left, a cold eternity.