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Rocky and Mary Time

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Rocky and Mary Time

Christmases they called from New York,
persistent enough to get through the jam
with their annual wishes,
faces I'd never seen
except in old 16-millimeter
brightly colored film exposed
before I'd been conceived:

Clowning, the young soldier encircles
his bride's waist from behind,
presses his face against hers, nuzzles,
and lifts her against his stomach,
her feet off the ground. Nearby
my mother, laughing, is drawn
into their arms. A shadow rises
beneath their feet, my father,
the cameraman, for whom they dance
and play.

Years later they no longer call.
Has our name been scratched from their book,
penciled out neatly perhaps, or x-ed
with ink? Or have they too passed
into some other silent footage?

by Leo Luke Marcello