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All Its Weight

James Jay

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All of Its Weight

He sees the thin scabs,
   fresh over his right knuckles,
   the blood beneath pressed
back by grease
   and thin, dry hope.

The tips of his fingers
callused smooth,

he runs them
   across her thigh
   and wishes them

more gentle than they are
or he is
   or thinks he is,

wishes to press
   the full weight of his heart.

(Almost blushed in the dark by thinking of his heart at this time, but he does think of his heart, then does again.)

And he wishes to press the full weight of his heart
   into his hands,
as if they were things
   apart from himself,
things that can hold
   love as certain
   as a crescent wrench.

But can he wish anymore
   into his hands
   already full

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James Jay
of decades
  of work, of fights, of machines?
Which is to say they’re already full
  of love,
because his decades
  of work, of fights, of machines
are love too,
love that is without words,
  love that denies over and over
in grunts and bruises until it forgets
where it belongs or why.

But those things are pushing him
  now
into more than they are,

making more for him to wish
  into his hands,
    gently, gently
coaxing under
  the hard pressure
    of the mind to move
the heart
  into the hands.

And she with the moon’s light
  cutting through
the bent slats of the window
glides her hands across
  his check—
his hope fresh,
    crisp, sharp.

His hands swallowing
  more than ever.