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Three Poems

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NIGHTS OF FLINT AND SNOW

fill with your long absence, the wind
not bitter,
ice, an age to come. When sky lets go
it is warm work digging you out,
headlight cold in the socket,
one branch of the cedar
down.

The compost path
steepens on both sides of the summer-
house. I think of old mines
reopened: veins of chard,
sad pods in coal-dark seams, the golden load
unfolding in the buried ear. I ride the waves,
green, to the sea
warm rain.

Weathered beets. The seal-faced kelp
torn from its rank salt bed
and the puckered kiss
of anemone.

Water turns us back,
road and river curving under ice
to the deepening source. Home. Inside
your place is warm
plum and apple slowly turning wine.

THE WOMAN WHO THOUGHT

her head was a teapot
brewed
and brooding on the leaves of fortune
thinly floating
over pale green waters,
shattered ritual teacups.

A wave of panic strewed the grey shelves'
matter under the lavender
hat arranged like a cosy
flat with bric-a-brac
inside the breakfront cabinet.

Past middle age
steeped in delicate Limoges
she took to reading
palms and palmistry—those brave infusions
bubbled over scones.
If laughter rippled back—

some weekend guest—
she heard the black leaves
steam to harbor
what the morning mist, the ghostly pilings
covered
and the woman thought.