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Originality Calls

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ORIGINALITY CALLS

In your mail, the rsvp
“I’ve got yoga on Tuesdays. Regrets.”

She shows up late.
Drunk in rumpled streetclothes
and now wrinkles are in.
Everyone is gone but
she doesn’t want to talk.

You tell her the bits you’ve been keeping
what you twine together with spit and gin.
“Whoever really likes gin?” she asks
on hands and knees
in front of your liquor cabinet.

She perches on the mantle,
garments dusting your coals.
Now a skirt, now a dress, now too-tights,
she pours herself one
in a cup left behind
as you tell her the time
you felt you were *vast*.
And she decides
she thinks *she* likes gin.
You drink and she smokes
from her stockings’ edges,
grey upward curls and she sniffs then dismisses.
“You can teach a two-man fish...”
She begins, but if you give a muse a cookie,
she’s going to want yours, too.
So you hold a party napkin, twisted,
up to her hair, and light
her Menthol light.
She smokes
but only because she’s drinking.
“Write about sadness

8 6

Write about love—

When you had it and when you didn't.

Write about how different you are.

Write a story where you pour me another gin.”

Smoke laughs through her veneers,

Which will remind you

of your father

and so you say

“my father liked gin”

To which she replies

“I doubt it,”

as she exits by the flue.