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Carve out the Heat

by Stacia Hill

There are truths in uncertain voices.
Mercury rising in a glass thermometer, beading

on a dirty floor. Wring out drops of silver liquid
from old rags. Listen to the slip of bare feet

on wood board. Listen as they move
along time, in beat with whispered chants

steam rising up
slam the sodden towel on the counter

Look at their eyes. Ignore the wet plump orb inside,
focus on the year-creased flesh. There are moments

trapped between folds of skin. Lines radiating
from peaking pink membrane.

Voices as blades. Rising shouts as they crush ice
with their boots. Slam it down.

Look at them stumble. Watch as they struggle
with their own bodies. Scrape skipping strokes—

winds rise. Hold them inside until they swell.
Breathe air along with the smoke. It tastes

of dishwater. When they throw fragile things at walls
they will rewrite a history.