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The Body of Winter

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THE BODY OF WINTER

after Elytis

It is late in the day, very late for beginning again. It has been a long time since the rain didn't drip from the eaves, and even longer since the crows didn't huddle like black flags against the iron sky. Nevertheless, I begin:

no one is home; nothing moves but the black slate pencil drawing out a life of words that vanish on the breath leaving only scrawls, splinters of desire on the pulp of dead wood in the smoke of dying December.

The palpable dark is not the dark we fear. But memory? Memory is the hell that burns us black with desire, it is a black flame burning the bridge between the dead and those who almost live. It crosses the sexual water.

Green River, Colorado, Navarro, Sacramento—even their names, no longer attached, sounded against the emptiness, draw them closer. While under the raven's wing my hand is writing out its future.

But I'm not there: the harder I look, the darker the world becomes until it blurs, water spilling into water, earth sifting the earth, and the dark syllables name that moment in which I might have been.