An Afternoon in Turner 109

Alicia McAlpine
THE NIGHT’S GIFT
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can’t sleep. can’t get comfortable.
then a low rumble. a night storm.

soft rain on the windowsill
drowsy, drowsy
gentle thuds of tuneless music
unexplainable peace, calm
cozy beneath layers of blankets.

the bookworm, the old soul, the lonely
ease into rest and warmth

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Mom, send me pumpkin chocolate chip cookies
Send washing the dishes and complaining about your coworkers
Sitting at the table, always a little on edge
Send me sunlight from midafternoon in October
And the feeling that life can be conquered and the adults will solve everything.

Dad, send me patience and Weird Al’s 42-pound shadow
Conversations about college and the confidence to be a functional adult
Words With Friends in the living room while Mom sits ten feet away
Lesson plans and watching movies til 1 am
And being taken for granted.

Luke, send me stories of school and teenage indifference
Growing up as fast as you can eat all the cookies, becoming a person I don’t know
Playing hangman on my bed and being annoying
The moment you cried and said you would miss me.
Your hopes and dreams and loves and faith
And the friend I’ll always have.

I’ve never been homesick in my life
But I’ve changed.
I’m no longer a gleaming-eyed child
With drying tears.
The chasm mocks me, but
Love is not bound by space or time.