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Dear Uncle Larry (xv)

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CONNIE MAE OLIVER

DEAR UNCLE LARRY (XV)

The neighbor's cat has been lost since 2009,
he's still orange, partisan.
But the consequences of our forebears
are missing from our patrician contemporaneity. I go to the museum &
again I stare, no choice but to fight with my eyes.

In three years, late birds and supplies, seven thousand
give more numbers, I'm exhausted, I roll on the floor
of the museum, I say that it looks like you're saying "Yes"
from upside down, thus acquiring "Yes" from all costs.

I've painted nothing. There it is, it's yellow, I gesture limply, there it is.
The images dragged from street to street corner, you know,
I stood in front of Maria Müller's building door, her name still on the ringer
and thought of Larry. So handsome. I'd wanted to call.

Larry was like the Soviet Union and its entire society,
he was like the women who made love to younger men in the
bedroom adjacent mine, *bison* I called them,
because they were enormous to me,

and who, through sheer intrigues, flung me and
BOOM! I swept the checkered kitchen floor. BOOM!
My student produced a gun,
Hast du angst? And I'd said "nein" I really had—I thought
they've been fine, these twenty seven years, if this is the end,
she'd taken me for a Rhineside picnic.

An airplane fell sleeplessly into pipettes, but we
shall undo their docks, we shall rewrite their picnics.
How it hurts now—hurt being the requisite for
discourse with one's own nonsense—
how it hurts now that I can't lay on that grass with her!

THIS IS WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE

Hast du angst? she had asked, turning the barrel with her manicured hand.

Today! Let's think, beat little drums slung to your waists, the climate is profound it is an award-winning climate, a nameless mass of climate.

Death came so easily, once. Now we're online, and thus not allowed to die. The macro photos of *niçoise*, the updates about our nasal passages—more so than them in particular—count on us. How indeed could we ever?

Don't forget, we're made of lake, we're suddenly hacked and painting self portraits in bath tubs. Larry said he'll write an email to his entire family, warning them.

I thought privately, flowing away, his crazed eyes the color of a frozen lake. I wouldn't have dared, instead I went to the museum and practiced my speech,

tested the floor again, again it was white. Please stand up, *frau*. It sounded like an insult—*you little frau*. Women in Germany grow up to be men, grow up to be mad, in their pirate ships they drink Aperol Spritz and go unrecognizably home without captains.

They do this forever, which is what the present is. For what do you lament the absence of film photos? Or that music comes now from screens? What is so wrong with that? The neighbor's cat is crying in earnest the persimmon tree is bare. It used to be heavy with hot moons

now it's just branches overlooking a scene. A mammal who suffers in scenes, and lives on! We count cats on the abacus

we watch the news, and he drowns himself now in a bathtub
in a painting! Like, softly.

Larry, in my dreams, seizes my arm and does something incredible.