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Half-Lover

Sam Thayn

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HALF-LOVER

I.

Make me good again, you say, and I leave my hands home next time so I can try. We never get tangled up the same way twice. I'm flexible, you assure me, and your toes are always *en pointe*. I used to crave ballerinas, but only the kind in air. When they land I am regretful. There's a play opening in your ears and I am in the front row asking where the bathroom is.

II.

If I see you again, it will be at the bottom of the statue in your image, the arms broken away and the head carried off and the perfect breasts. Your legs will be stained with centuries. I will take you home and wrap you in your winter coat until your torso thaws. And you will love me. And we will find your head in the arms of your sleeping daughter.

III.

Passing over my mouth like a stream, the red taste of memory. I smile at your long broken neck. I smile at your fenced-off doll parties. Every backyard has a pool and every pool has the foot of a king in it. Your father is outside grilling and the clouds dot his eyes. He'll make a fine addition to the city cemetery.

IV.

When I drive to the city, you are a skyscraper. The clouds at your throat. I put my hand over your face and that's when you see me: the only train in the desert. The blinking red lights on the face of the dog buried in our backyard.

V.

A box of eels sent overnight at your door. Sign here, we said, crowding your stoop. Sign here and here and here. Your son became an angel that night. And his ribs were showing. We chased him to the sea and cast his footprints in bronze.