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I Saw, A Small God

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I SAW, A SMALL GOD

Our boiling green splashy sphere
furnished a range
another awful mouth. Wonderful.

Snappy strings held masks to the heads
of children pushing through grey slush and wind
to homes tied-up with dogs.

Moose
went the barren streets. Wind
scratched at the crust of drifts.

Passing deer making prints, you might leave
small mounds
where kids dug in, pushing,
shrieking to be king of anything.

Doors hung behind chain-link,
brown, counter to blue and green siding; sickles
dripped on stoops; long hallways of numbered rooms whistled.

Grownups decided to be things they weren’t.
Track stars with knives. Bald. Painted green.
We were told the man drooling
in our neighbor’s front yard
was mostly a bottle of gin—giddy for more
than another wild winter in Alaska.

Sense ensnared in icy gusts—the smell of sea bit,
lap and drag of water over sand; fall’s flouted leaves
fled their brawny weave: freed—signals in
a dream, the painter, four-fingered for frostbite, 
rose nosed, abstract asleep—
Brushing branches heavy
with needles, numb womb,
twiggy, snow-shadowed core:

October. Your scratchy throat and
breathing red eyes. Out, everyone flicked and puffed up,
adjusted their
masks. Orange fell. Sunny on grayed banks.

My mother equipped me with a pencil mustache and
plastic six-shooters—4 dollars burnt in my pocket
for bus-fare, maybe a hot dog, bubble-gum soda.
I’d more than a few fingers to pick my
nose with. I was
off! Emancipated.

Holding a candy cigarette in my mouth,
I watched a shivering woman in white
vomit behind the Laundromat
and a bottle of vodka unhurriedly
navigated his fickle landscape.

I loaded a fresh set of caps and cocked my pistol.

Arm in arm, the woman and her
werewolf businessman embraced,
stumbling under the suggestion of night.