

Wilderness House Literary Review 4/2

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No Fire Left to Ravage

No fire left to ravage wood, home,
separate families from their memories,
and burn through prayer like kindling,
mincing clouds to ash
and stinging heaven's negligent eye
ever defined an era as black as the distance
between my fingers and your hair.

Never a city river swelled over sandbags,
swallowed sidewalks and park statues,
tore open apartments to steal
the sleeping and kneeling and books
many clutch tighter than truth or children,
nor a meadow cringe under hail,
shore genuflect its boats, temple its gods,
vain poet his mirrored words.

Never have these thieves split my ribcage
and icily gripped my exposed organs,
collected such blue-black tears in my skull.
Only the fading beyond my touch
of the lilac and light that trails you
could sour waking alongside this sun,
with house and friends and gods surrounding
and firelights blinking from morning sky,
dying, and relighting hours later
to share with your land its blazing yellow uselessness.

Walk With Me Now

The south moon, drunk on us,
and each bent leaf
arcing over our night path
witnessed the way

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your tongue danced my every dream
and shattered the eardrums of summer.

Hand in hand, we meandered
through the unfinished book,
neglecting the poetic duty of sight
except occasionally
when the vehement wind
wore down your dress' defense
and, parted like its yellow cotton,
my eyes tasted autumn and spring conjoined.

Through the olive grove window,
swaddled by those that fly
loudest in heat, colored to fade
into our surroundings, flooded
by jaundice sea scent and that
which we fabricate from desert rose.
The purple darkness lost us.
You returned to me as stolen voice.

Their shared siesta met us on the dirt road
and, like stray dogs, nipped our heels,
hungering the scraps our footfall cast.
Alone, to be far from
yet one with.
The slow rolling of half-people, dreaming.
The blue-black tears of guitars and violins.
The burgeoning energy realizable
only to nameless flowers and growling waters.
Together, we made the bustling stillness our own.

Walk with me now.
Allow wide birth for the somnambulant moving
and useless baying of distant slumber,
regret, memory.

I still perceive through this window,

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still smell the flaky pastry of abandoned night,
and I cup your everything in mine.

Walk with me now.

The night still cannot find us.