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Poems

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THE ANGEL OF MY TONGUE

I lie
dry sticks in the sun
and befriend
the mouth of fire

I will be judged
by earth and wind
there will be serpent tongues

In the dry season
I will be afraid

The savannah must burn
Deer run
in the hot blast
Mice cower
in their tunnels
like brains

DEEP SLAB INSTABILITY

The avalanche man sips his yellow beer
tell tale fan at the corner of the eyes
squint the snowfields so bright and clean
And he remember the saying
All the experts are dead
In a layer of snow
is hidden the amorphous kiss
that sends the body
tumbling down the slide path
to a frozen ungracious event

The rocks scoured bare
rushing furries blast
down the mountain
through black firs
married to white
under the thunder
of a racing white machine

HORSE POOR

She fed the horses every night till he
started coming home drunk and hitting the
bedroom walls with a piece of chain and wouldn’t
remember a dam thing next morning and then another
fight. The kids are sent to do chores and the
lights in the house dim for no other reason than
Henry the ghost, long dead cousin, is around again.

She started going to college, wants to go to
Africa. Wants to study about Katherine the Great
who somehow lives in her. Wants to get ready for
the break when the money comes in. The city is
eating the farm.

Maybe she doesn’t want to try one more time.
And the kids come home from school, she dreams of
freedom and the horses are for sale. And the goddam
stallion broke the fences down again and near killed
one of the mares. And he is sober and locks the
horses in his solitude while she dreams.
WILDERNESS IS A STATE OF MIND

In the river bottom we will search for poles to build a platform on which to set a hollow mountain and from its pedestal proclaim the era of management the end of acts of god as spirits leave the forest so dies the mountain

PREDATORS

Along the highways travellors are in collision the elk struggles into the meadow into the daybed where he stiffens until the cold or wolves eat his brain

Wind hustles the tops of lodgepole pine spreads the message around

In the hard grey light of morning the carved nostrils of greasy black ravens split the scent of carrion prepare for council their prayer wheel tightens down to eyes first to the steaming gut pile beautiful life