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Don't Go Out for Water

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Anna Malihon translated by Olena Jennings

DON'T GO OUT FOR WATER

Don't go out for water
Drink drops from the walls of your underground shelter
You become lighter almost like a hummingbird
Though hummingbirds drink a hundred times a day

The world's moisture in the eyes of survivors
In their minds, they tie their hands
and lie on the roadsides as punctuation marks
without text

Foreigners will call these pine-filled spaces Hollywood
And wash flags from our houses
in laundromats
And will place dirty lies into the open
beaks of their enemy brats
and the nice blood-soaked teddy bears
And voices from the underground shelter

Don't go out for water
Drain yourself to a critical point

"I see the heart through the hole in the body of a girl"
"Say this on camera"
And the medic is no longer willing to say anything
And what if the pines could speak

They bought a swimsuit for their daughter that summer
Take it
maybe someone can use it . . .

NELLE

And the volunteer handles it like
a living thing

You are the last one left in the shelter
The last one left on this earth
When you come out no one will be there
You don't want to drink anymore
And like an infant the spring earth
sucks the bitter milk of dead
ladybugs