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An Elegy

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Katie Chaple

An Elegy

I've forgotten a line I had, a thought, something about rust and sound, and I think of all those dropped words, the violet seeds of thought, the moments I don't, won't ever recall unless you bring them to me—set them on the table with napkin, steak knife, and I can feast on those, or you might deliver them to me in bed some morning, and I can sip from what was only black, smell the woods that we stood in some orange afternoon. Sometimes you carry them at night, and they float like someone else's dreams. You're a blacksmith striking sparks from slabs of darkness. Here's that bottle of Rioja, and look at this, you say—a sky we saw ten years ago from Chueca, then center of Bairro Alto at midnight, streets filled, clothes flapping from lines scalloped outside apartments, those dealers who kept offering to sell you cocaine. Sometimes you bring me our daughter in my lap, or the two of us sprawled on our grass, sunlight against our closed eyes. And even my naked younger self appears, walks from bath, dries her hair, dresses for a jazz festival that got rained out. I'm singing, looking ahead, and know that some time I'll turn around to make certain, and there will be nothing but air.