

Mr. Carlson Goes Home

An angel sits on the roof top of my favorite neighbor's house.

She pretends she can't see me looking,
her eyes upturned toward something I can't see.

I think I know why she's here-

for Mr. Carson,

but she doesn't seem to be in a rush.

Neither was he-

months passed,

he stopped laughing at the politicians I read to him about in the paper.

The skin around his eyes sunk

and made his eyes glow black, like an empty train tunnel.

No new lights would come,

he boarded his last train long ago-

still traveling, until the angel came.

“What are you waiting for?”

I whisper through my window, firmly closed.

She looked over, and regarded me.

I was startled by her attention.

Her eyes somehow resembled clouds,

and I looked away as mine watered and stung.

When I looked back, the roof was void of
the extraterrestrial.

Mr. Carson's window burst open-
out came the angel, then Mr. Carson,
onto the roof, like kids sneaking cigarettes.

My own window flew up
as Mr. Carson, in his best suit,
twirled the angel around
in a quick dance.

She smiled at him, and gestured in my direction.

Mr. Carson met my eyes and grinned,

“Good day, Missy, I'm going home.”

He tipped his hat and bowed,

“It's been quite a show.”

The angel and him hooked arms, and she winked at me.

Then with a flourish of her hand, the branch
closest to my window grew a cherry blossom,
one that would stay all year long-
even when it snowed.

Marked Soul

Her communion dress belonged to her sister,
another hand me down,
she didn't mind.

It cascaded out at her waist, and she likened herself to the center of a flower
surrounded by petals.

Her hair crisscrossed into a French braid,
borrowed shoes freshly polished and tight,
but the cross that dangled from her neck was new- all hers.

The sun outlined her body, and her silhouette of ivory fused into the stain-glass window.
She studied the pious faces chiseled in bright colors within, and wondered if anyone had ever called

St. Catherine a bitch,
and if so, did she knock their teeth out.

She looked into the priest's eyes when he said,
"The body of Christ".

She thanked God that His Son didn't taste like a corpse.
She prayed that her eyes would never look as sad as Father's.

God answers- tells her
the choices she'll make,
the small pink life that will never be.

The moment of understanding passes in a muted blur.

She bows her head low for the blessing,
already knowing her soul is marked.

It's Their Nature

The air is cold so I hold my breath.

Your voice makes me tug at my mittens,
they're too itchy to bear.

I know you'll always be a little wrong for her,
even if you both tell me to look at the Christmas lights.
They glow as snow crushes under our retreating tires.

Her hand fits in your jacket pocket,
and she keeps a lighter in her purse for you.
She still wears her hair natural, just how you like it.

You yell, and I keep my feet from
touching the ground when I walk.

She yells back.

Neither of you realize how you sound together,
like a song with no instruments.

I never longed for love or chaos,
it was there, in everything.
Sometimes it seemed as if it could
summon clouds to the sky,
and make lightning spiral to the trees.

Leaves would be illuminated,
a second of yellow, then bark
slashed pale.

Maybe not.

Maybe soon nature's volatility will cease,
and raindrops will be held in heaven.

Until then. thunder echoes in my ears,
but I'm not angry.

Rain must come to grow the
flowers.

Goldfinch

She had one of those light voices that glide in the sky on the wings of
yellow birds.

Could she teach me to fly too-

so I would never need to take refuge

on branches with bitter winter leaves?

Her voice carried so close to the clouds they

cloaked her in white.

She carried raindrops in her eyes,

different from the tears I held in mine that

fell away in streams, and she turned them into a prism of colors

that forever changed my irises from

brown to gold.

Growing

The red of her hair shone through my clouds.

She wore her new rain boots and
laughed at the drops drowning the soil.

Her small feet- a life saver pushed
the wheel of precipitation and I found

the innocent shade of her eyes

at war with daunting days.