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that winter it was as cold as on the peak of Everest  
as the checkpoint at the border of helplessness  
we chucked planks into our little stove  
a white emptiness licked at the windowpanes  
we heated the room with the cots of infants long grown up and  
moved away  
with picture frames and kitchen stools  
then I fed the flames with books  
rereading the lines that had etched themselves onto my brain  
lines that have no fear of fire  
bit by bit the windows went black with soot  
we became invisible  
in the warmth

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all the full-stops are in place  
I haven't sown a page with full-stops for a very long time  
unfinished sentences rub shoulders with finished ones and dead ones  
the snow tastes like my mom's face powder  
which I shared with my classmates at a New Year's Eve party  
in front of an old mirror in the girls' bathroom  
the separated amalgam transformed us into fairies or demons  
whichever we wanted  
back then, did I see forests of full-stops before me?  
I want to leap into snow  
which now tastes only of snow

\*\*\*

the wolf moon is a magnet suspended in the starry emptiness  
the city's hyenas howl softly around corners  
the city's heroes are quietly leaving the battlefield  
the city's tired god is resting on my doormat  
moon icicles in his beard  
moon frost in his eyebrows  
his face tells no fortunes  
lava from extinct volcanoes blackens the moon's seas  
they say you can change your life under the wolf moon  
a moon icicle melts in my hand  
maybe a full moon scar will erase the lines on my palm

\*\*\*

night is a woman with glittering eyes. her palms are full of snow and  
jasmine petals.  
night is a man. his darkness contains devotion and the deepest  
tenderness.  
night is a phantom. I can't really remember his name anymore.  
nocta? nox? no one?  
night is my unborn child. I remember his name.  
the only one.

\*\*\*

when I was you  
when I ached with your childish desires  
"oh how I want to go to the rushes by the forest lakes  
where Mom won't let me  
there are secrets and golden shadows under the water"  
"oh how I want to go over to that girl at the bar  
her pimp won't let me  
he needs money  
I need to set the girl free"

when will I stop aching  
when will I stop longing  
"never  
my love

never”

\*\*\*

please tell me  
that I didn't die  
the rope didn't pull taut  
the ambulance came in time  
the fire went out

please have life enough left  
to tell me  
that I didn't die

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the idols have been fed on blood  
yours cold foreign hot any  
the illusions have been herded into a barn  
to fresh hay and sacred spring water  
after you leave they'll tear each other apart  
the last one left will try to gasp a blessing to you  
but you won't exist anymore  
you'll drown under the ashes of what were bridges and houses

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the record of the end has been written  
underline it in thick pen  
go and pray  
it never happens again  
go and promise yourself:  
I'll learn to smile  
another year  
it will be easy to forget  
in another life

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each morning we go to war  
me against you  
you against me  
“let me go to the desert  
I want to go somewhere I have no enemies”  
“the deserts have been long been off-limits”  
“just let me drink from the river  
drink that sweet water that tastes like pollen and sky  
my throat and soul are choked with blood”  
“you’ll drink from your canteen of blood like everyone else  
the river water is poison to us  
our sky is salt and smoke”

tomorrow the same battle  
a different you  
a different me

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let’s build fences now  
sky-scraping fences  
why mess around  
let’s build them right through the sky  
so no stranger can get their hands  
on my little cloud  
let’s build them straight through the heart of a god  
so everyone gets their own immaculate piece

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we don't need horror or fear anymore  
soldiers wade through the piled corpses of their former lives  
tanks put mirages where once there were cities  
now we need to watch  
the blooming of a rose  
while there are still gardens  
read Old French poetry  
while there are still libraries  
love  
children  
all the world's children  
as if they were our own  
now before they are turned into soldiers

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when the final mirror of your lifetime breaks  
you'll read the truth about your naked trembling life  
in its glassy hieroglyphs  
a language forgotten by everyone  
the last mirror doesn't flatter you

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freedom of choice erased  
its page of history will be blank  
you're in free fall  
between air currents and the paths of bullets  
your hope of escape  
floats off on a gilted cloud  
like an unopened parachute

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in the great migration of peoples  
you took root in the field  
I floated away down the river  
our children left to seek more fertile fields  
clearer rivers  
they said they did god's will  
the god of nighttime whispers had come to them by their beds  
we didn't hear him  
we the deaf  
we the clay and mud