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Between Cardboard Mountains

SEARCH FOR INSPIRATION IN A SMALL TOWN

Start at the bed
sheets and move down
to the box
springs
to the flowers
stuck
in the carpet and
the smiling faces
sitting on your desk.

Travel outside, through
the woods, down the
suburban streets, over
the muddy feathers
and blood-stained cement,
past the house with
the blue-lit room and
next-door—
the one
with the torn curtains and closed
blinds. Listen to the
cars driving past and the sounds
leaking through
windows.

Look inside the store
fronts: blond-haired women
with large breasts and small
shirts, leaning over their
customers, reaching for the mustache
scissors. Take notice
of the man's smile,
but make sure not to step on
the other man lying
at your feet. Smell the
booze, the laundry and the
frappaccinos, the hippie who
you just stepped over.

Hungry street kids, resting against
each other, may remind you
of a commercial you once saw.

The retired English professor

It was quite endearing
that man
He spoke words of Keats and
compared me to the words
of the man himself.

Oh, blush not so!

So, I smiled and continued
to pretend I knew
what he was talking about.

Untitled

Forgive words. They are often misleading,
too many or, more often, not enough like her
breasts in an extra large tee-shirt and

between the lines there is nothing but white:
a tan-line shielded from the sun of infinite
histories.

I advise you to ask the dark question
marks shaped like the women's bodies

who knock on your door while you sleep
and quickly disappear beneath the table:

why?

For the girl who fixed her earring in the reflection of my photograph

Thank you.

My concern about

your earring being lopsided
has now subsided.

Trust me, I understand.

Reflection is up 90%

when a black image
is placed behind glass.

And, besides, it is hard to not look
and want to fix your own image

in that of a white-phosphorus
chemical victim.

Jellyfish, maybe.

When they bump,
they glow. Blushing,
perhaps.

I remember one time
in my backyard. I wanted
to feel them, squish them,
maybe. So, I gathered a few
and picked them up--
with a net.

The result was an explosion
of glowing bodies,
drifting and flying
this way and that.

It was beautiful.