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She Waits for It to Come

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SHE WAITS FOR IT TO COME:  
Samantha Schaefer

This poem is dedicated to my father,  
Dr. Wayne G. Schaefer

Her Father is marooned on a futon in a pine cathedral;  
she’s half asleep—
Tells her stories of a little man named Eddie who walked  
from New York to Florida with tuberculosis
“Hey there friend, do ya know where yer goin’?”
“No—but I’ll know when I get there.”
She waits for it to come:

nestled in tangerine glances of passersby  
bare footprints mark the wavy pavement,  
highway’s yellow lines so familiar  
into slippery avenues, hunting coral to build his castle  
the curfew  
darkness of WWII;  
constructed  
over lines of polarity under Mother Earth’s skin,  
like Mom’s stretch marks—spider veins  
little man of ability.

Staring blankly  
T.V. induced daze; too much time spent observing other  
people’s lives—  
the pad of thicker skin just slightly  
above her eyebrow begins to pulse,  
glancing to her left  
Grand Prairie Street, the sky shimmying its work clothes off—  
She waits for it to come:

The sky strays gray tonight  
streaks of red  
“Red sky in morn, sailors  
be  
warned”
a Viking has the sky's head on his sword,
tangled mass of arteries over a pond of gray slush
spattering a blank canvas
Jackson Pollock on the rocks.

She stares across the empty Harding's parking lot
8:33 p.m.
Galesburg.
Orange light from the bank across the street fills her car
with cream-sickle sweetness
drops, on the windows
texture like her 14-year-old brother's acne ridden back.
She waits for it to come:

Brain
abandoned and free—
to wriggle,
an orphaned baby wrapped in newspaper,
anxious, wanting to be indoors, next to warm knees.
Oscar the Grouch pops out his garbage can
to see the primary colored world
notices my mind and raises it as his own,
the continuation of a bad mood.

Lying awake beneath the walnut tree filled circular window,
the tree adores her.
It would like very much to sleep with her—
smelling her human earlobes, relishing her mortality.
Instead
it inspires her dreams.

the sound of apples in the bottom drawer of the refrigerator at home.
of baking at 350 degrees in flannel sheets,
cracking toes, laying on the right side,
so her heart doesn't quit
five years too early—

She waits for it to come:

sleep.