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My Roman Marriage

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MY ROMAN MARRIAGE

Heather Good

I hope to marry a man
with a Roman tongue, one who
writes grocery lists on scrolls
and reads Cicero at red lights.

He will wait until after dinner to have me,
but only after he recites to me
in his voice like a fat bee humming
the epic poetry of Maro.

I will be reflective, a curved flute
full of bitter, red-black wine
becoming warm and still,
waiting for him to abandon his study—
flushing his cheeks upon the first mouthful,
leaving a coat of drunkenness in his belly.

I will fall asleep
with oil-painted images of Lavinium’s shores
and his slender, olive fingers.

Each morning he will tend carefully without complaint
to the garden. I will eat grapes and laugh
while I sew purple stripes
onto his toga’s extravagant folds.

We will live like this, pretending the Mediterranean is
clean
and that no Roman ever wanted war.