

SHEROD SANTOS

The Green Screen Settings

How could I care I'd come to be a member of a family
my name so-called I rose from bed
made my way down the corridor up the stairs across the stone threshold
the mole-hilled yard already in sunlight
sparrows already in bunches roiling.

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Once upon a time I sat upon a curb where was I where was I going to be
what took me aside the butterfly bush
what boredom lifted the hours away.

Once upon a time a bicycle fixed on the future passed
a girl in marigold pedaling
one leg shorter than the other
not a word between us only once or twice a glance my way.

Was death upon her then?

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Would it hereafter ever be over? Like waiting for a knock at the door
I paced myself biding time
between thumb and finger the green-gold powder from a monarch's wing
its iridescence fading.

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The night I left not fleeing so much as walking away from myself in time
I broke my word
no moon no stars no last look back just making my way if not then
where would I bygone be . . .

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. . . or come to be preoccupied
with what across the inward eye amounted to my destiny
a sixth floor walk-up with an alley view
interior to a shadow play whose end if unforeseeable
I still presumed to say.