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THE MIDNIGHT LOOP

The Sunday city is oneiric, almost as vacant
as I am. The street is sore with blisters
of light. Michigan Avenue voltage passes through

me, crossed wires short out. My recaps
make a different heatless sizzle. The engine
altos its monotone to the sibillance

of sudden lakefront rain. I click off
the radio's stale blues, hum my own obbligate,
no flatted fifths, just anil-dyed sharps.

Night is a long leech; it fattens on me. Way back
I passed something I need, maybe on the verge
of the Magnificent Mile, or deep in the gorge

between highrises. Nothing I ever bought was it,
cheap, dear, used, mostly ordered by mistake.
Millions of rounds of electric bullets

fire from oblique angles, explosions of white,
stinging white shrapnel. I'm riddled with cavities,
bleeding the brightness I hoped to hoard.

Paper thin, bait for every breeze, warmth escapes
in gusts of hunger. I see myself trying
to recharge in the a.m. like a lizard on a pier.

Somewhere are people I forgot, people I promised,
people I owe. They roll up in winter potholes
and old shadows with broken names.

The moon comes out, sheds a pale legend above
the skyscrapes. It rides the leech's back,
irisless eyeball, cold mocking halo.

I pack my wounds with all the loose illumination
I can catch, shake my head at two leftover tourists
hoping my roaming headlights are a cab's.