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Long Walk: The Day Before

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LONG WALK: THE DAY BEFORE

Laurel Snyder

A man wanders a few days in the desert with
some goats, returns to find his Nile red,
discovers his fish floating, and still doubts
the skies— Because he can

always drink his milk and eat his bread and
wait for the (Sometimes it works and
sometimes it doesn't) brief respite—.
There are figs and wine and then

some snarling—the wilderness inside
the walls—an entire threshing of ice. Timid frogs
loose their fear and entrench. A thin camel stops
where he is standing. Locusts drift

like a winter of humming wings. The filth
crawls in to chew the yellow sores that make
the women sick and the women turn—stomachs
turn. This isn't death yet, but then—the darkness—

the pitch—the abyss that begins where his body
ends—. Nothing a candle can fix—. Nothing his hand
can move inside of—the mind keeps stumbling—.
If there was a storm, he could blame this

on the storm but there isn't a storm—. In the pitch, he
can only think of the insides of things—
Almost—a man in this darkness might pray
to see his son die—might pray for a glimpse.