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The Madman

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THE MADMAN

This room, I have been here before,
surrounded by the furniture of my mind.
From the ceiling, spiders hang by their tongues.
The pig on the mantle twirls his tail.
I will not oink.

This woman I remember from old movies.
She is the bride of Frankenstein.
I laugh behind these private hands,
surprised that they are mine.

Light creeps round my fingers.
Stay away, I say. Let darkness keep.
Children, indefinite as clay, speak
in omens, their faces bounce like balls.
The doorbell rings. "Friends," the woman says.
I know no friends.
I am a newborn baby left to die.

Why is it always the same,
my soul stretched on the wall
like a skin, the map of my country,
people placed like pins?
Down my streets the invaders come,
the peninsulas of my arms, the heartland gone.
I die with each hard step that cuts me off.
Don't they know that I am a strange country?
They enter me. I am the whore
who eats their seed, my dumb mouth
lost in the realm of language.
How does one speak without interpreters?