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Winter Stone

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WINTER STONE

I close my eyes.
Strange marriages
make the benches heave,
and something that rises
is always mistaken
for faith.

The cold authority
that lifts from stone
to shift the sad weight
of trees in high snow
is the voice of my father,
the only voice I know.

Only the statue is near—
why never someone who
loves me more than I do?

Today
I confess my feet are cold.
They are like deep roots
tangled in the web
of a great, sleeping spider.
I fear they are becoming stone.
Father, my life is like that.

This small package of flesh
begins to frost like a glass house.
How long has the owner been away?
I write my own fierce poetry
as if I could take his place.
Does it matter if I stay
or drive myself to return?
Lover, will I ever learn?

This winter
has the violence of a church.
Half my life has been spent

in this park,
as if I would see the statue fall.
I walk away from that life,
listening to the statue,
believing nothing at all.