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# The Register

Madeline DeFrees

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## The Register · *Madeline DeFrees*

All night I hear the one-way door sigh outward  
into billboard glare. The ninth-floor  
cul-de-sac left by the wrecker's ball, my new  
apartment.

Inside the known hotel, décor of watered  
silk and fleur-de-lis, the French Provincial  
red-and-white, mine for the night, no more. A weak  
bulb wears a halo through the dark.

The street  
divides below the skid of rubber burning. One branch  
leads to a hill's last word, one into morning.  
Flying in place, hung from its thirst, hummingbird  
in the honey throat of a flower.

*Bless me,*  
*Father, I have sins to spare* and love  
these relics of the hybrid years I spent afraid  
to move. Chant of common life, field lilies, all  
that labor, too cautious then to spin.  
Not even Solomon would know these regal lily flowers,  
translated fleur-de-lis my wall  
provides, the glory flowers-*de-luce*, of light breaking  
clean on the iris. I open  
my eyes to the light.

*Bless me, Father,*  
under heavy sun and hoping  
still to make your life my own. I cannot nullify  
the work this body's done  
nor call each act religion. Wherever one road  
joins another, blind, I think of you  
and conjure up the loss. When two roads, gaining  
speed, speed up to intersect, I cross  
myself and lay the body down, arms open for what comes  
to pass. Father, I am signing in.