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Breaking a Voodoo

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young black woman knocks at my door
management doesn’t answer    no blankets
Lana—4 years—smiles  can i see your cats
exchanging life-stories over coffee
borrowed saucepan & cups    her need
is to tell: wild people follow me
never speaking    always following
from Chicago to Seattle   my father hates me
beauty hallucinated    a dreadful stamping
on flowers or the drowning of fireflies
enough money to stay one night in hotel
with small Lana    waiting for the sailor
she is too knowing to make a wax doll
riddled with pins or burn a candle to St. Jude
i tell her say NO NO NO to shadows
(she weeps into my hands)
the ship returns in tomorrow’s light