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The Flying Geese Quilt You'd Brought from Home

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THE FLYING GEESE QUILT YOU’D BROUGHT FROM HOME

for Priscilla Beaulieu Presley

One day in 1965 when I was struggling with angles, with making things fit, determining \( x \) and eliminating \( y \), Elvis Presley locked the two of you in his bedroom and didn’t let you out for a week. He liked it cold. He liked the TV on. He liked you nude, and pure, fifteen years old, dumb as a bologna sandwich.

You remember lying in bed, a quilt with a thousand triangles up to your breasts, your breasts exposed because he liked to look at you, happy that he looked at you, counting the triangles, losing track, a shadow at the bedroom door, two bowls of tomato soup.

I was in love then, too, in Kentucky, and kissed a boy from California with a beautiful name, and when he had gone I thought about him for months: I kissed him in September. A cold breeze had come up. It was under a streetlamp. His mouth felt warm on mine. If I imagined him in my bed, it was I who submitted. Those days every one of us knew the equation: his name fit perfectly after mine.