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# January

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# January · Matthew Lippman

*for Karen*

She calls me by my first name. I am  
up the hill. In the moonlight  
all the land is black and white.  
No majesty like the one before me burning,  
every step into the forest. Away  
from the house. *Matthew*. I can hear  
it like the bells. She opens honey  
for her hands. In my nose I can feel her.  
*Matthew*. The brook repeats and repeats.  
My body is timber against the cold. Earth is  
quiet between my ribs. Her mother is buried  
here. Next to a harpsichord built from fingernails.  
Play each melody twice, once in its own heartbeat, once  
for the dying things come out of it. *Matthew*.  
I am up the hill screaming at the brook.  
*I know you*. The snow is blue.  
A bell fills up a child's stomach.  
This is one dream when she opens the honey jar:  
her mother's breasts knocking against the door.  
Like this. Like this. Tidal waves in the jungle.  
Near the red logger's tractor, *Matthew*.  
From the harpsichord, a breath old with snow.  
All these lives too. Where the branches snap.  
I am in the hill. She is calling:  
*Come inside before your tongue blows apart*.  
All these lives. I hear them.  
In the trees. When my ears dissolve.  
Her mother twirling twigs on a knee.  
Each angel born quiet.