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Spoon and Tree

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SARA LONDON

Spoon and Tree

What gladdens her is the spoon,
with its tiny saucer of remnants,
its slender shaft, scrubbed last—
and now the kitchen's clean.
Clean are the knives and forks
all akimbo in their drying cage
at the window. The spoon
leans alone toward light,
a backyard limb reflected
in its sunken belly, so a
liquid darkness tongues
its curves and bends
along its slender neck,
making the one tidying up blush
at this bed she's come upon—
refractive, gleaming, the old
dream of coupling
here portioned out
in such a strange
supper.

When the light is gone,
the immaculate house hushed,
she puts down her book
and returns, barefooted,
waking the wood planks
to the kitchen. The cupboard,
too, sighs, its ascending note
sliding wind-clean. And even
before shaking whole grains
into her midnight bowl,
she has reached out,
across the ticking, low-watt

world, her warm mouth
clamping itself wetly
around the cooled,
hard truth
of the spoon.