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Not Even Rustles from Your Red Dress, Rustles

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GRETCHEN STEELE PRATT

Not even rustles from your red dress, rustles

Coming down the stairs before the red. Not reindeer coming

Towards the fence with their antlers sawed off, towards

Small hands shoved through the chain-link fence, small

Fingernails licked by their dry tongues. Not even fingernails

Sinking into grass. Not even winter sunlight sinking

Without finding me asleep on the rug without

Blankets under the potted Norfolk pine. Not river green blanket

Humidity hanging in the trees. Not Mom and Dad, their humidity,

Amber cocktails melting their veins at that hour. Not amber

Bobby pins sunk in brown pomaded hair. Not even bobby pins

Dropping on the red aisle. Not even that dime dropping

Into my flute before I go on stage. Not the night falling into

Clicking dials of an old gas pump or a cream umbrella clicking

Open. Just bats softening out of the chimney into the open

Backyard blue darkness. Not even me in the wet backyard

Taking off my shirt in front of the new roses taking off.

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