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Notes From A Museum Guard

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ANDREW SEGUIN

NOTES FROM A MUSEUM GUARD

In the palace of the curious, the world continues to perpetrate its mysteries. Middens, pickled orchids, forests that stretch in endless resolution around the glass. An observer’s fingers can spin cedar carousels, green wheels. There is a room of sleepy alphabets where one can catch a word of the quick dreams that stab the aged in mid-sentence. The letters flutter to tongues as moths, but mouths close on them like cages after all the silence, decades of infection, and no one remembers the cadence of the ancient songs, their raveling. At night I hear voices in the hall of unbuilt machines, laughter and lament intermittent as they look at plans to unearth archives, portable stairs that compress like bellows. Visitors are also specimens, unconscious of what they display in this place: bewilderment, elbows, noise. An old abacus keeps track of the guests, its calculus clicking around the ceilings with dragonflies. Theft and trespass are inevitable. I tell no one not to touch.