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## Night Cycle

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STEVE MUESKE

## *Night Cycle*

in our beds, the skin stretched over  
moth-black eyes  
flutters with the machinery of sleep : a canticle

for days aliased with stratagems : their settings  
windows into the glassy plots  
& counterplots

of sexual congress : yes, full-throated :  
the spindly maple reborn not of fire  
but the teleology

of neurons : a tree no longer but lightning  
in a long room leading to smaller rooms : a secret ladder  
that leads to a dank basement

where cords of wood are stacked : a vast  
cast-iron furnace, its breath  
in January's abandoned house : jars of must : the ruins

of winter in the frosted box of photographs  
left for the dead : the rose, opening :  
a prime number of gray roofs

angular as the houses of Horta de Ebro : a glint of sun :  
the interruption of gunfire  
& screaming in a clapboard schoolhouse : the rose,

folding : the two words for mourning :  
one version of the self with wings,  
a cyclopean eye : a penchant for light : there is

a wolf at the door : a solution that doesn't involve  
unscripted weeping  
at hieroglyphs : a parallax : cool sheets :

in the basement a slain lion :  
four words form a hedge around your body  
due to a new aesthetics

of origin : means : the flame is already out-  
curling, a genie : houses  
move into and out of parks : the auto-

genesis of the bird,  
a sacrifice : the garden, overrun with  
wild flowers : an oubliette

where the well was : the many,  
one : the one, many in endless paper rooms  
littered with drawings

of the minotaur : the thread  
in your hand from the lost kite : oracles  
catching rain on their tongues

like children