The Madman

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THE MADMAN

This room, I have been here before, surrounded by the furniture of my mind. From the ceiling, spiders hang by their tongues. The pig on the mantle twirls his tail. I will not oink.

This woman I remember from old movies. She is the bride of Frankenstein. I laugh behind these private hands, surprised that they are mine.

Light creeps round my fingers. Stay away, I say. Let darkness keep. Children, indefinite as clay, speak in omens, their faces bounce like balls. The doorbell rings. “Friends,” the woman says. I know no friends. I am a newborn baby left to die.

Why is it always the same, my soul stretched on the wall like a skin, the map of my country, people placed like pins? Down my streets the invaders come, the peninsulas of my arms, the heartland gone. I die with each hard step that cuts me off. Don’t they know that I am a strange country? They enter me. I am the whore who eats their seed, my dumb mouth lost in the realm of language. How does one speak without interpreters?