Condensation

Stephen Sandy

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This road leading home—through the security check, jet din, past concrete fields,
yaupons and banana fronds, to this fiefdom of regret, dotted

with petite tract castles—ends in an old routine, the clearing away, the ritual

refusal that greets an offer to wash the dishes. The closet doors swing

shut. There is a decorum. Put out the light, let love fill the dark.

Condensation / Stephen Sandy

A wisp of straw hangs from the apple branch. On his window condensation blurs his view, couples walking by the river. Apples, spilled by the wall.

This autumn plenty. There, white noise from the heart. And no one to hear the old voices, the singing. The cricket crutches moonward from the cooling hearth. This

small clamor in his blood is somehow some small knowledge of his child: which will become a protean encroachment on the petty dark of solitude.

Possession is nine-tenths of the disenchantment. The hills go platinum with frost.
He could remember keeping score,  
all those affections in a row

then letting them go. And  
letting go, he let time alone.  
Only the windy young  
have nothing in common, although  
they share findings. They find common

cause against calendars  
and fear another hand on the  
misted pane where, smiling,  
a girl peers in on them, a gold  
leaf in her damp, night-tangled hair.

North Winter, Crocodile /  
Diane Furtney

There is a crowded stifle  
inside the country bus. 
The crocodile,  
out on the open, riverbottom  
ice fields  
that ravine and hump enough  
to suit its purposes,  
has already gorged  
and is softening its gray gut  
in the sun.  
It will be hunting later  
under the edge-trees  
in the distance,  
snouting between the blue weeds,  
its thick lids adjusted  
slit against the flat  
winter wind. We know  
the scrape of its back  
claws in the ice  
can leave the light streaks