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I'm not sure how much hollower  
things can really get than this

the light that was once enormous  
is now a closed door  
made of stone with a row  
of heavily armed personnel before it

I can't even imagine what it feels like anymore

I have to lie all the time about it

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another burning question for the oracle

her ladle full of spit and coins

discovering what I thought was correct  
was correct but not in the way that I had thought

simple

like how the planet doesn't know we named it after ourselves

how disappointed it would be to find out

how unreal it feels to be discussing any of this stuff at all

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a shepherd who can name  
every stone he sees

a scholar of cognitive velocity  
sipping on a vitamin D-enriched beer

every leaf betrays  
the substructure of a different society

you realize this one day and the next day  
it's like you can fly

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the map turns to ashes in your hands  
every subsequent second  
slings more and more evidence at you  
of a dim but undeniable cohesion  
to the material universe  
like a cow's lowing  
in the far-off distance  
that you eventually grow to love  
there isn't enough time left to fixate on the meaning  
it's always later than you think

\*

drunkenly rifling  
through my pockets  
for throat lozenges

numerous political tropes  
nearing their inevitable  
conclusions

it doesn't really bother me much either way

I take up the mantle reluctantly  
only to cast it down again later  
in worsen condition than when I first took it up

it was what it was

it was androids versus druids

one day I'll wake up  
and the next day I won't

most things happen in a similar way I assume

everything else is beyond me

\*

I say you can't  
live your life  
in parentheses

you say I can't  
leave my room  
without getting stoned

every single word  
has a hidden meaning

every single word  
means the exact same thing

\*

eyes shut

soul horizontal

each successive thought  
like another barking rottweiler  
manifesting inside my skull

surrounded by familiar-  
seeming strangers asking me if I  
bleed out in black or white

leisurely disintegrating

but also I see you nearer now  
than I ever have before in my life

\*

the repercussions  
of maintaining the usual  
accumulate until even your own room  
seems covered in spikes  
you stand there waving to a parade  
that has long since passed you by  
your wine glass overflowing  
with slugs and ground-up weed  
it's not your fault if you can't believe  
that good things can happen to you  
and it's not your fault that it's always  
the present tense  
I toss what's left of my doppelganger's ashes  
into the memory-digesting Seine  
and watch the universe's molecules  
slide past each other  
and shrug

\*

I wake up coveting everything

sections of sun-warmed snow  
slide off the roof merging into  
a single large mound below

somewhere in the city a man  
in an undergraduate-crammed room  
staples strips of uncooked bacon  
to a white wall

nothing seems irrelevant anymore

death is the death of death

heavily your soul  
marches along beside you

form among forms

a thin blue shadow  
stretched long across blue snow

\*

with two satellite dishes for eyes

emptying every wine bottle within reach

the protagonist wins a semi-important award

and carries it back down to hell with him

\*

a bowl of candies  
replenishing infinitely

weeded out and shouting weakly  
at what looks like the moon

a million shadows converge  
on an asterisk the size of a planet

an engagement ring  
with a scab instead of a diamond

a politician whose entire platform  
is based upon their burning desire  
to fall madly  
and irreversibly in love

\*

the janitor reads all of Spinoza  
then faces down a pack of wolves

it makes no difference to the ocean  
whether or not the economy erodes

a toddler tossing Molotov cocktails  
at the desire-directed automatons  
until our cognition softens entirely  
and all that's left of eros  
is a single Oreo glued to a plate

I've made my peace with the peripheral

I don't care if I don't actually exist

for the rest of the planet's contestants  
everything isn't enough  
and nothing is way too much

I guess these things take time

maybe sometimes they take forever

\*

press start to pause the game

but don't hold your breath

\*

a painting of an infant Jesus  
disintegrating due to the heat  
from a nearby supercomputer

millions of other machines  
doing dumb shit you can't see

the translucent face of your father  
obscuring mountains of nostalgia  
between which lie broad plains  
of not-so-unpleasant ignorance

it seems like society won't sleep  
until every single route to ecstasy  
has been extinguished entirely

you sit down and try to read  
whatever books there are to read in this house

depriving yourself of agency  
in order to free yourself  
from the ever-replenishing burden  
of responsibility

a poverty of concepts

a canoe overturned in a lake

\*

it's boring how much  
I think about money  
instead of watching  
the sun draw another  
maze across your face  
thoughts of last autumn  
accumulate in the center  
of the world-desiring soul  
where God and Satan  
squint each other down  
over an ocean-sized Scrabble board  
in this novelty-driven city  
the painters and the politicians  
all dress the same  
they dress like they're all somehow  
observing themselves from the opposite  
corner of the room  
they dress like they're all spies

\*

a can of Sprite  
glued to the ceiling  
seems to me  
to somehow represent  
all I know  
of humanity's soul-  
discomfiting history  
like a medieval monk  
staring wry and content  
for hours at the pouring rain  
language and colour alone  
might just see me through this century

\*

you said you never wanted to read  
the book about the serotonin-deficient insect

I said I never wanted to write  
the song enumerating the forbidden names

you said you never wanted to either

\*

a plan to go home develops  
as you pace the moonlit pit  
a younger version of your father  
skates across a frozen pond in your mind  
your hair grows so long that you can't  
even recognize yourself under your hair  
certain phrases make everything easier  
a missile launcher is pointed at the moon  
a sword composed of your own frozen blood  
is slicing through the vacant space  
between the moon and me  
and you

\*

a ray of light  
pushing through a pane  
of blood-coloured glass

the planet's core revolves at 120 bpm  
to keep me stoned  
but alive

meanwhile baby doves  
devour tiny pieces  
of plastic  
and metal  
believing it's rice or bread  
dropped by kind-seeming humans

\*

nobody lives in the same universe anymore

an invisible chain links your brain  
to the Earth's molten core

your Wordsworth-infected dreams  
seep into the fourth draft of the novel  
you're writing concerning the present-  
day conservation of Hadrian's Wall

the air this year seems more like the air  
you remember from when you were a kid

you disappear into yourself again

the world stings but you love it

everywhere you look you notice voids growing

every word you say could be your last