

Urbana

by Kelcey Wells

Hot pavement and heavy breezes,
the night still young,
still being formed from the either of twilight.
Phantoms of day's pristine detail
hang tediously in the thick night air,
offsetting shadows,
drawing them outward in obtuse angles.
Subtle illusions to unchaste intentions.
The sky now a dark claustrophobic dome,
closer and more oppressive than the brightness of noon day.
In fearful response
a million immaculately burning fires
toss their minute incandescences out into the abyss
creating a thick curtain of ever changing shadow
enveloped in an immense humming of light.
A scything mirror turned downward unto
the deep trembling that lies 100 feet below concrete and asphalt.

Generations of urine and feces, blood and semen,
seeping through sidewalk cracks and trickling into gutters,
layering the thick sediment of offal,
run through with renegade electrical charges,
subtle sparks lost to the myriad of wire and metal
that binds the great urban mechanism.
Primordial waste and long forgotten rottage
stutter with a million tiny shudders.

Union and reaction
divining from the filth a black quivering heart.
Origin and foundation of the monolithic titan,
reanimated decay pumping thin crimson life
and smooth ebony death through asbestos filled veins.

Viscous liquid punctuated with debris
climbing upward through stone and silt.
Filtered darkness spreading its filthy extremities upward,
striving toward a non-existent sun.

and my first evening steps
from a well-worn curb onto the still-warm late evening asphalt
are frozen by a cool wave of frost.
Soft musculature tightened and transformed,
made a medium for these deep stirrings.
A clean sleek streamlined darkness
rises from the sidewalk
climbing my neurons with ice-cold electricity.
My chest tight and stinging with frost-bite.
My skull struck like a tuning fork.
My eyes vibrate subtly in their sockets.
Hazed streaks of street light coax out realization,
no longer soft glowing street lights
now the vibrant hum of a mechanical titan.

My eyes hovering in the night sky,
unbodied panorama of night's stirring city
searching the dense labyrinth of neon and shadow
for my now microscopic body.
Unable to squint,
unable to strain enough to see,
but knowing,
knowing all too well my place deep below the steel and glass
hidden tight in the darkness.
My body is not a glimmer or a glitch
in a blanket of darkness and fire.
My self only fuel for more emptiness,
nothing more than a microscopic conduit
for a self-satisfying monstrosity of electricity and smoke,
a lost speck of dust on an imageless mirror
and then retrieved quick to my flesh
with a violent flash of lightning.

Back into the street
with a shattering crash of thunder
and the rain falls like splintered glass panes on my head,
saturating my frozen shaking body.
Fighting hard to inhale
and then a shaking exhale
that finds me running.

Arms and legs slicing through sheets of rain
as my frightened body leans forward into the stinging wind.
Apartment glow and beaming street lamps
streaming by in swirls of color and streaks of white.
Not bringing knowledge now,
only reaffirming absence and passing time
that my adrenaline fueled flesh
futilely tries to overcome,
running deeper toward the darkness and mayhem
of another urban midnight.