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Ghost Story

Under a night sky as immense as sleep.

On a land mass shifting over the earth’s blood, dream-slow.

Near the muddy coast, mangrove-dark, of a body of water rocked by the moon.

(How oceans heave with things unseen.)

In a small town, destination luminous, bristling lawns shadow-filled with trees.

By a highway, cutting the town like a vein, tarmac nightmare-black, power lines feeding the muscular road-trains.

Under a terracotta roof, hulking like a grave, encrusted with ash and moss.

Beneath a yellow globe, flickering blind and fast.

At a kitchen table, laminate bottle-marked, off-red.

A man and woman fight.

Curses settle like asbestos in their word-full souls, then fists, suddenly fleshy as infants, thud-slap.

Reducing everything—all of it—to nothing.

(And so the universe feints, becomes domestic.)

Maria Takolander