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The Interpretation of Dreams

For David McCooey

1.

My dreams these days leave me to sleep.
In the unsound night my body is steadfast in its life support,
and in the morning I remember nothing
of the Machiavellian intrigues of my insomniac brain
as it reckons with paralysis and blindness,
a history of diurnal violence.
What lingers is only the sordid
and ordinary intuition that I am not what I seem.

2.

Now here you are wrestling with the night,
your brain sparking your corpse like Dr Frankenstein,
as if life might grant you alone dark vigilance.
There is a field restless with scarecrows that send birds reeling,
which only your brain knows about.
Your larynx pushes out its cry for help
—the noise alien as a starling's.
I must wake you, quickly, so you do not disturb our son.

3.

Within the undead body of our sleeping child
his brain is desperate as a Punch-and-Judy puppeteer.
There are fighting words: "Mine! Mine!"
I write them down. But if I were a muse, rather than a scribe,
I would tender dreams that shimmer
like birch leaves and glow like moonstones;
not these darkling hallucinations of a brain
already whiling away the night on its pitiful past.