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Dancing Around a Fire For a Smoke Signal

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Daulton Selke

Dancing Around a Fire For a Smoke Signal

The last eastbound bus drove past.
It's only three quarters to the new day
but I spent my last dollar on a cigarillo wrap
to watch the smoke flutter like atentebens
over the skyscrapers to distant villages.

My friend came to talk about a noise in the dark:

we both looked away.

She told me before that our porch floor was a marimba
and she dragged her eyes carefully
over the cracked panels.
I tried to make out constellations.
You can't step on them,
but I think about black melodies leaking
all over the page so that in the great
cacophony those precious silences
stand out against the darkness like a
yell.

She said the other night a little girl got out and dreamt,
sprawling out across our hillside
street when a car swerved over the edge—
We were asleep, so that focus snuck
through the guardrail, bouncing
like a pebble down the cliff.

Around the corner, we skip stones,
listening to their faint pulse patter against the surface,
and look at one another before they sink.