The Street In The Dark Of The Night

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I
The leather wheel turns
— Elaine’s outfit was a bit drab, tonight.
— What makes you say that?
    The sleek interior matches the sleeker exterior
— So dark, and she just sat there silently at dinner.
— I didn’t notice.
    The two are alone
— Didn’t notice? For chrissakes Robert, it’s New Years and the way she was acting.
    Something’s not right!
Ensuant silence
— I…well, I suppose you have a reason for noticing?
— Oh, she’s my sister, of course I’ll notice if something is wrong with her.
    Their familiarity intensifies the loneliness
— Let’s not bicker, this is the worst night of the year to drive. Let me concentrate.
— I’m not bickering! I’m just worried about her.
The brakes lock
— We’ve had a good night, let’s not spoil it.
Ascension
— I know, I’m sorry. Honey, be careful going over the tracks.
Descension
— Robert?
    The Man is silent
    There is an abyssal distance
    Growing between them
— Answer me, Robert.
    Advancing down the darkening avenue
    Her voice grows quieter and quieter
    Approaching a hush
— Robert.
    The shafts of light
    Fall upon a translucent figure
— Robert…
    This time the last syllable not even audible
    The breath catches in the throat
    Hypnotized by dismal eyes

II
I turn my lambskin collar up while pondering the street.
Reaching the corner, a mellow lamp illuminates the names: Rockefeller and Arden.
Wow, how specific; this intersection belongs to every goddamned suburb of every goddamned city in the whole goddamned nation.
Burrowing my chin into my chest, I let out a shrill giggle; my angst is completely for the irony.
To my right, there are lights growing.
I squint as the recesses of Kiwanis are contorted into arching shadows, silhouetting the damp forest.
I pause in the shadows, wary of a police man on this night of all nights. 

A sedan slides down Washington. 

If it were cold tonight that Volvo’s luminous beams would strike the icy streets, casting a dull radiance. 

I cross at the road’s brightest point, my second self mimics my first and flips its hair. 

Eyes cast down the foreboding lane. 

Overhanging branches create an abrasive tunnel, that is a route too treacherous to travel by. 

I continue down Washington. 

Reaching into my pockets, I feel the heft of illegal weight in my hands. 

I stop briefly at the corner and ponder the darkness and the coldness of it all. 

It’s funny considering the night is bright and beautiful. 

After a second thought, I turn right on Parkview; my footfalls din loudly in my ears. 

A brief snippet of drunken banter flutters upon the night air; wind is picking up. 

As I look slowly over my left shoulder (then quickly over my right) the breeze whistles in the bare branches. 

The night wind rages above me, rumbling overhead. 

I see the hill and the Burlington line before I notice a shadowy man walking. 

He crosses the street silently, and I can’t tell if he is swaggering or stumbling. 

I regard him by standing still, I would rather stay far away from everyone on a night such as this. 

My mind is murky and my apprehension teases my heart, the beats resounding in my eardrums. 

He, crossing the street, I imagine him as losing himself. 

He, the same as everything else fades into the enameled night. 

One at a time, darkness engulfing; fading into the enameled night. 

Achieving the incline, his shadow crosses with the overcast contour of a twisting oak. 

All the while, I stand silently, attentively observing an innocent passerby. 

After the swaggerer is out of sight, I continue on my weary way. 

I am nearer, ever nearer. 

Once again, a lonely traveler crosses my path. 

This one looks expensive, some European thing; quietly humming, it passes nimbly. 

In the preparation of my last illegal rite of the night, I obtain the hillside. 

Perpendicular to the tracks, I sprint. 

Uneven rocks, awkward stride, I don’t feel the earthen floor as I rush along the line. 

The same car, that lonely traveler; we meet appropriately. 

I see the woman in the front seat, her eyes transfixed on mine, I smile wanly at this faceless lady.
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At the mouth of the dark alley my feet crunch crumbling earth.
Laconic street lights creat a halo vibrant enough to
bring a calm to my mind; I am close.
My heart settles, seeing the red Oldsmobile and all the
pines reaching upward; palms outstretched to a complacent God.
Halting briefly at the step, I am home.

III
A shallow gust
Leaves glide momentarily
skimming across the quiet street
Naked trees exhale brief moans

Resonation
Blank drone of celebration run amok
Sounds of an empty people
Concurring with an inconsequential tale

The last grasps of green
Long yellow
The forests final breath
Sighed in Late November
The ominous whisper
Through the skeletal shrub
The Deciduous stands bare
It is a dreary slumber

Wires and Cords
Gabrielle Lehmann

They created a brother unlike any other
Born not of this race but of wires and gears
And then was another born to this same mother
With none of his grace but alike to his peers
Built in copper and steel, the first son unreal,
A mother too quick to disown him
For a boy who could feel, had a soul, not a reel
--From her favor, this son had quite thrown him--
But he was, of course, reading from a dead source
And would never have noticed the difference, for
There is no remorse from a heart made of cords,
For a wired mind suffers no distance
And did he dismay- he would not, anyway-
It would be but a moment to strike it
For nothing in him would be written to stay
If his mother thought she didn’t like it, but
Against expectation, he grew very fond
Of his mother’s last born and her favorite
And it seemed for a time that the brothers could bond