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The Lilt of the Flute

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UNTITLED

Somewhere in the recesses of the smoky bar he sits alone, clutching a beer like a life preserver. He feels the water deep and dark around him, the waves of veiled smoke. He's been here every night since she left him, sitting in the same corner. The booth knows his form and wrinkles in anticipation of his coming. His sad brown eyes watch painted people pass before him, looking for something he knows will never come. Memories rape his mind like an orange hot brand. The water swells his eyes. Feminine laughter peals through the bar and slips under his nerves like fine glass. He wonders why she left. *"Was I too much?"* The waitress swings by, drops a fresh beer to cure his thoughts; the cycle continues.

He stumbles through the glazed lot like a wounded bear, groping for anything as he crumbles into their car. The lingering scent of her perfume pains him. Driving home, he turns to her, but of course, she's not there. Her smiling face is only in his mind, stuck like quick sand. Acid tears line his cheeks, *"When will it stop?"* The thunder and lightening answer him. Wet trees only feet away bow over him. His hands react to the thunder's call. The engine roars against the wet night, an angry machine. Tires sliding, the curb pulls him in. The trees bow again to catch him, but miss. Glass shatters as the car buckles inwards like a compactor. Metal shreds as easily as paper. Now he is airborne, sailing. The windshield grabs his face and spider web cracks surround the bloody spot. A final collision. Cement explodes. Silence.

Sparks like fireflies. Sounds of rain...and pain. Thunder claps in approval. Lightning moves electric forks over his flesh. The rain, like gentle fingers, brushes blood from his face and wet, open eyes. He is free.

— Donald Jordan

THE LILT OF A FLUTE

The lilt of a flute
in a Roman alley. We
shed ourselves and dance.

— Robert N. Georgalas