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## Benita

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BENITA

Sun reaches a place  
where a pillow turns into a mop  
of graying hair  
and knows it has arrived  
at Benita,  
creates a quiet threshold  
between sleep and waking.

Dominated by dark brown eyes  
and cheeks the color of dried earth,  
she is the eternal woman,  
risen each day  
from the ruins of dreams.

(specimen unfurling, scentless phial,  
star trapped in an artificiality,  
year by year, analogies,  
who knows how old she is,  
picking pears, trailing shadows,  
drought and flood  
pencil-marked on walls,  
glowing inflorescent, imbricate,  
drowning in a spit's embrace,  
all of creation, every unknown force,  
streaming electrodes,  
apples, roses, everywhere  
and they owe it all to her,  
like red earth itself,  
branches that bear fruit,  
streaks and drifts, winter's debauchery,  
family names as sticky as resin,  
windows blaze, forms remain,  
they've kept themselves, like her,  
lilies in a long vase,  
globes, relics, leaf veins, cobwebs,  
here, in a glass,  
the drops of last night's wine,  
implicit in her understanding,  
if soil, of time, of planted seed  
and warm reactor core)

In frozen space,  
she retains something  
of her splendor.

JOHN GREY