Swamp Rabbit Collection

Hayden Cox
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by Hayden Cox

Swamp Rabbit I: Mortality

countless burnt orange leaves
crushed by a speeding scarlet bicycle
the setting Sun surveys the scene

longing to remember what it’s like to feel
the amber of the city’s lights
warming her face

longing to remember what it’s like to feel
the cool sensation of the South Carolina wind
whispering softly in her ears

longing to remember what it’s like to look
down on the broken asphalt
and watch the centerline flick by

Tic. Tic. Tic.

she can’t remember how it felt
to look up into the robust green of the surviving oak leaves,
relishing in their vigor
despite the knowledge of their fate

soon they will lose hold of their tree-mother
to be lit by amber as they slide softly through the wind
down to that broken asphalt to lie patiently and expectantly

waiting for a cool evening in fall when a scarlet bicycle comes speeding by
Swamp Rabbit II: Junkyard

Selfless
   Rust
Forlorn
   Tire
Empty
   Window
Forgotten
   Junkyard

Time eats the automobiles
Unaware of the millions of miles of memories tucked into the decaying leather seats

    John’s first view of the Grand Canyon
    Caroline’s first road trip
    Rachel’s first drive
    Michael’s first kiss

Their owners are dead, forgotten by all
Except the Fords, Chevys, and Chryslers
They once couldn’t live without

Swamp Rabbit III: The Water Tower

A timeless sentinel rises
from the Earth on four posts of concrete or steel
at this distance, I’m not sure which

What I do know is the old codger has ruled
over this domain since before my birth
perhaps before my father’s as well
collecting it’s cool corrosions
I wonder what it has seen
in its years of watching over these upcountry hills
I wonder what wisdom it may have
to offer the next generation

If only I could speak its language

*Swamp Rabbit IV: Barbed Wire*

A bulb of red trickles down his thumb, testing the wire. I remind Cole of the “No Trespassing” sign posted on the fence. He replies stubbornly by taking off his shirt and wrapping it taut around his hands. He grabs the wire and hoists himself over in one motion.

He turns back with the same sheepish grin that has gotten us into trouble more times than I can count. “You coming?”

I glare through the chain links
beyond his skinny torso towards the hopefully abandoned, half-collapsed shed
caked in illegible graffiti.

Goddammit Cole.