

BLAIR TREWARTHA

HALF-EARTH

Heat was a soft glove wrapping
your lungs. We bathed you in a pool
of melting snow, palm-cradled your back,
belly breaching like an ice cube in the sun.
All around us, firestorms. Something like an animal
scraping towards us. She was there, and then not there,
so you and I burned our years like lost dogs until one day
my hand felt your forehead and there was instant, fearful,
sober. At human dusk, you first waved to me. I told you
of a town where all the rooftops keep people alive,
where billboards drink air and quench thirst, where everyone
grasps the heavy weight of forest die back, the infernal range
of the bell curve and how we fool ourselves every time.
With your first step, I taught you to swim, how to hold
someone's hand as you shove your palm into their chest,
how skin burns with or without a belief in flame.
With your first word, you asked me what we had known before
and I said everything. All of it. We let it anchor to the pendulum
as it swung, tried to predict the landing, calculate the gap
between two right angles, argued whether it should have
ever swung at all.