

Three Stories Of You

by John Riley

There's a story of you who says to go on, to walk the room, to pretend to contemplate. Promises that if you lift your hand your head will follow. Assures you when your bones reignite there will be day, there will be night, and you'll know which is which. Don't worry about the door, this story says.

There's a story of you who says big things wait outside the door. Let me give you a taste, this story says, and lures a city into the vestibule. Streets spread throughout the house. Get on your knees, he says. Crawl the city limits. Don't worry, you'll be welcomed. It's night in the city. All the streets end at a wall. A harbor laps the door.

There's a story of you who says he wishes you weren't here. There is nothing left to regret, he says. It's time to leave the false starts behind. He introduces you to his plans, refuses to negotiate, walks you down the hall. At the door he shakes his head before you can beg, slips an arm around your shoulders. We both need a new direction, this story says. Walking out the door you tell him he's the story of you that you like best.

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