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*by* Sean Lovelace

Two black swans cook all morning in the kitchen, making Red Pringles and Alone-and-Coatless Pringles and Pringles of Seesaw, of Jungle Gym, setting the silver pond with Pringle Bowls and Pringle Juice and napkins for Pringle dabbing. Ronald Reagan arrives for lunch. He sits in the best chair and it collapses so he unfolds himself up like a mechanical shadow and sits in the second best chair. The swans silently serve the Pringles. Ronald Reagan says, "What manner of lunch is this!?" Reagan's words sound like hard dry black meat. The birds cannot comprehend; never has a house guest refused the Pringles. Flustered, they sing, "These are Pringles pick up two Pringles put one upside down on the other now hold the Pringles to your lips and we can all speak song together." The sky tilts hammer/tong. The second best chair collapses and the front leg gashes open Ronald Reagan's shin. He sits there bleeding, from shrapnel, from a war on the imagination. He is so hungry, so angry now; the only way to save face is to destroy the birdhouse entire. Do you understand? Are you still fighting the good fight? Possibly not; on the wrong side sleepless, legs flailing out. Your soul a black feather, a coiling rent feather, a question mark of blood.

[the rain at this time heavy enough to appear as smoke on the streets. paper strips peeled and fluttered from the many billboards. some children mistook them for leaves]

