

RYAN MITCHELL BURGESS

That Year

We had eight months of summer. Each minute a Junebug at the window. The moon turning us inside out with hot salt, mercurial waters.

I wrote. You cleaned pipes. You wrote. I bathed in cold. Beneath a pulley window with a silver chain vined over, all night comes in.

We listened to sirens in the morning. Lull of tug boat in the evening. Cars driving over dried potholes. Neighbors opening and closing their doors.

The still hum of cooling units outside houses kept on. Even when there was no money. The cats were hot, pregnant. They lay in the shotgun's shadows.

We broke beer bottles, smashed garlic in the kitchen. Filled drinking jars brown with tobacco and papers. Tended to dying stalks of thyme against the thin metal fence.

I held your chest together. You sealed the shelling of my skull. I braided your longer hair. We got ample sleep. Dined on river fish, charred onions. We rummaged for things to sell.

The tires went flat and our conversations slowed. We waited in thin blankets, naked, for autumn.

Winter came without autumn. We covered the holes in the floor with packing blankets. We had to preserve all heat between us.



ABOUT RYAN MITCHELL BURGESS

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HERON TREE

10 May 2015

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