

In the Bushes

*The angels were once as plentiful
As species of flies.
The sky at dusk
Used to be thick with them.*

- Charles Simic

In the bushes, in the trees a thousand angels
sparkling like glow worms or Christmas lights—
strong squadrons riding out on the smoky
breath of clouds. One summer a pair
nested in the light outside our door.
My father shook his head, my mother
worried about the dust shining around bits
of string they dragged from everywhere.
But for all the dirt, they blessed us
with their wings and red heads, their trailing
wisps of light congealed into webs of silk.
As sun burned on the river, I left secret offerings—
half eaten cupcakes, Lifesavers
broken into hooks, wedges of halvah.
From my window, I watched, their wings
just silver blurs as they sucked sweet marrow
from detritus and crumbs.
On the water their song rose, audible
light glowing downstream toward the rising moon.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steve Klepetar is the author of *The Li Bo Poems* (Flutter Press 2016), *A Landscape in Hell* (Flutter Press 2017), and *Family Reunion* (Big Table Publishing 2017). His work has also appeared in *Verse-Virtual*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Red River Review*, *Illya's Honey*, and *Snakeskin*. A college professor, he makes his home in Saint Cloud, Minnesota, but is currently living in Fremantle, Australia, where he is a visiting scholar at the University of Notre Dame, Australia.

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