POETRY

Reported Speech

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"Urbanistic" by Carlos Lorenzana

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Why I didn’t report
your speech:
I teach my students
that *when reported*
direct speech takes a step back into the past,
so it becomes yesterday:
I’m happy—
she said she was happy
You’re right—
he said I was right—
and neither of us are
any longer.

So if I say that,
you will no longer be here,
you will no longer be a dark
neverending poem
(one of the millions
written after Auschwitz),
an argument at night,
an act of speech
or violence,
a clock tick,
a chance for redemption.

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