POETRY

The Gift

by Volha Hapeyeva



"5th and Markwood" by Madelaine Kobe

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he bought her a dress
as a farewell present
on his birthday

whether she still wears it
I wonder

my own dresses I buy myself
gifts are a strange practice
particularly those from men

perhaps because of Lévi-Strauss?
I was a present myself for so long

giving and receiving
and receiving so as to give away
a symbolic void
binds us

in place of men and women
we exchange their stories
with the hope
of becoming — at least — distant
relatives

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