POETRY

# To Hold the Falling Light

by Melissa Luz

"Learning to Live off the Land" by Ann Keeling

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here —
i try to hold

what won’t stay

and my fingers
become cracked riverbeds
where things
meant to be water
refuse to settle

since the first time
i saw you
*(light dripping like honey*
*from a wounded morning)*
i understood there are meetings
that arrive like broken constellations
half-stars, half-ash
dreams that spill
before we learn
how to cup the night
without tearing it

some days
i think
maybe
it was meant to be:

a hand too small
for the tidal pull of longing
a want too vast
for the quiet
you left curled
in the corners of the room


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and still
i keep trying
to save a little
of the shimmer
you left in the air
when you passed —

as if your absence
were pollen
and i could gather it
with trembling palms
and *breathe* again

but what won’t fit
won’t fit

and what is meeting
is also gravity
what is dream
is also blade
and sometimes
we bleed
from touching things
that were never meant
to rest inside us

we learn
in the slow way
that some things
exist only
in the brief moment
they brush our skin
like wings
testing air

a bird
still wet


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from its first tropical storm
trying to fly
with bones made of glass

and then
become distance
wide as the Amazon sky

in the end
i think it’s this:

a dream
that refuses a nest
a meeting
that dissolves into weather
a weight
too light
to stay in this world

and me
two small hands
still reaching —
trying
one last time

to hold
the falling
light.


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