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Queridos

Elizabeth Theriot

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Queridos

Elizabeth Theriot

Ryan Chighizola Memorial Scholarship Winner

After eleven it is hard to tell
who is more tired—I, or the night itself.
Both of us sink to fill spaces forgotten in daylight,
both of us melt and sigh.

The candle flame dances to a heater's hum
and the maraca footfalls outside my door:
fiesta, siesta, I cannot speak Spanish
but lying in warm sheets I hear the language,
spoken by someone I have yet to meet.

Midnight
and outside looks thick as clay
but nowhere near as pliable.
Somewhere a sculptor's arthritic hands creak
and I breathe to the imagined sound of it
in the trees, and my bones, and the settling night.