

Ghosts

by Lyle Rosdahl

I see ghosts. They accost me in their sleep. Hundreds of them. When I wake up (after a long night of half-waking), I think, What would ghosts want with me? I have nothing for them. But at night they're there again, watching, tapping my shoulder as I lay awake. Sometime even the drinking doesn't stop them.

Last night they began muttering. I lay in the gloom watching them swirl unsteadily in the light breeze of the ceiling fan -- their susurrant voices emitting smoke that held for just a moment before the stuttering wind from the blades dissipated them unsteadily. Their vaporous thoughts became more pronounced until at dawn the room misted with accusations and expletives.

I fear that tonight they will become hard. That their accusations will turn on me. I am powerless to stop it: time, in military increments, continues. In the garden, flowers wilt in the heat of the afternoon. The dirt is cracked in places. My tongue feels thick in my mouth.

