

The Delta

By Bruce Bond

If you are going there by foot, prepare
to get wet. You are not you anymore.

You are a girl standing in a pool
of clouds as they catch fire in the distance.

There are laws of heaven and those of place
and those who see the sky in the water,

angels in ashes that are the delta's now.
They say if you sweep the trash from your house

after dark, you sweep away your luck.
If you are going by foot, bring a stick,

a third leg, and honor the great disorder,
the great broom of waterfowl and songbirds.

Prepare to voodoo your way, best you can,
knowing there is a little water in things

you take for granted, a little charity
and squalor for the smallest forms of life.


Voodoo was always mostly charity.
People forget. If you shake a tablecloth

outside at night, someone in your family
dies. There are laws we make thinking

it was us who made them. We are not us.
We are a floodplain by the Mississippi

that once poured slaves upriver to the fields.
We are a hurricane in the making.

We could use a magus who knows something
about suffering, who knows a delta's needs.



We understand if you want a widow
to stay single, cut up her husband's shoes.

He is not himself anyway and walks
barefoot across a landscape that has no north.

Only a ghost tree here and there, a frog,
a cricket, a bird. And if the fates are kind,

a girl with a stick, who is more at home,
being homeless, than you will ever be.

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