

# The Other Side

By Jennifer Elise Foerster

My crown.  
My room.  
Surrounding snow.

These are not my  
hands, my winter shoes  
carried off by uncertain music.

There was a meadow  
behind my house  
and if I should see myself there  
she would tell me  
there was never a meadow

and then walk through me  
as if through a cloud  
and carry on in her own  
solitary direction.

Crows still caw  
in her palace garden—  
tram rails, rain,  
stammering moon.

Once lilacs bloomed  
their huge white knuckles  
breaking the winter of my room—

it was a dream—French windows  
on a Viennese street.

Every street I cross  
angling alongside  
smoggy postwar artifices

branches scratch  
against my sleep.

How my body was a branch  
in my sleep.

And when I woke  
years later  
I peered down upon it  
leafless and stiff.

No roosts left, no caw.  
No birds blooming

in my dream's green crooks.

Afternoons alone  
are labyrinthine.  
I wander the city, searching  
for what? Friends,  
we knew where to find each other,  
tapping the window of the winter room.

We were thinner then,  
younger than the chestnut trees.

Everything has its seed  
much later  
and on the other side of time.

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