

Night Battles

Armies are coming,
Not seen at first but heard
Across the river and field,
Beyond small hills rising
Inside a mind set for sleep.
Can you hear them, dreaming?

In that hazy blue place
Where dreams root and germinate
The moon leaves the sky,
Plunges into the underground
Of some long remembering.
It is then that armies come.

Hooves of their horses
Pound the ground bald with war,
Crusades that begin and end
With no place left in peace.
Phantom generals, stout and decorated,
Shout commands that ricochet in our latex world.
I wait to see the glimmer of swords
Through trees dyed heavy with night.
You, asleep and facing away, must see none of this.

Armies come and go, their movements
Metaphors for my own indecision,
To go with them, to stay behind,
To refuse to decide.
Tonight I will decide nothing.
Insomnia's banner waves
On the dark and digital field
Of the air-conditioned night.
Tonight no sleep will bring the armies here.
This night, all battles will be fought inside.

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