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### On Shallow Rocks

I am told that demoralized things taste a lot like metal.

I should have done something  
when I watched her bleed copper and nickel  
on every birthday.  
Now, my bedside table reeks of pennies  
and I wake up with an iron taste in my mouth.

I wash it out with whiskey  
and chase it with bitter poetry—  
just enough to mask the silence in my home.

I still have ink stains on my knife  
from where her voices hurt me.  
Each manic episode is a tollbooth  
and I have run out of patience to pay.

Her empty side of the bed  
reminds me of a black hole,  
so I try not to get too close.

I knew we had gone past the point of return  
when she began oxidizing like metal tubing,  
rusting a dusty orange, just from living.  
I guess steel isn't really meant to live forever.