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Junkyard Love Elegy

by Derk Olthof

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I

Chipped green glass paves oil-soaked paths between the walls of multihued abandon—metal flesh stacked on cinderblocks, our bodies obscenely displayed according to their years of waste. Tangential chariots, a hundred horses in our mouths, each horse kneels, bleeding black from broken legs. Shot—our carcasses were hooked and drawn out of black stone rivers to a razor-fenced lot. The dregs of potholes—our rust and rot. Purple membranes of gasoline cling to puddles like cataracts reflecting rancid rainbows. And our names? Would you believe we were called Cadillacs? Now, here we lie in the dross of junkyard lanes while dirty hands extract what wholeness remains.

II

Those dirty hands once had the touch to turn
us anywhere they would. To the unending ends
of their Lethean rivers. Now we yearn
to tread their sunken granite walls again.
But broken is forgotten. Drive on drive
on we drove moving men to their dreams,
but finding only mutual demise.
There is no rest. Men are strange machines,
and unlike us, they drive even when broken.
And within the scrap heaps of their glass dark
towers, they lift their shame, like us, holding open
their hoods while filthy hands search the inner parts
for something to replace what is missing inside.
And somehow end the constant need to drive.