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## Predawn Aubade

R. Flowers Rivera

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**PREDAWN AUBADE**

R. Flowers Rivera

There was no sex involved.  
 Barefoot, I went  
 Down to the kitchen. And there,  
 A reflection faced me, gaunt  
 In the harsh light of the sliding, glass door,  
 Perched  
 In the flimsy plastic chair,  
 Whittling dawn  
 The way one contemplates  
 The tart  
 Pit of a nectarine. Her  
 Gown fell open. Her  
 Brow like a crate -  
 Low, short square.  
 Her breasts were still.  
 She was beating back  
 That need to flee  
 Sitting poised  
 Coiled in upon herself like a sprinter's  
 Inner watch, wound tighter than tight,  
 Anticipating the gun. And what could she say but,  
 "This ain't what I signed on for.  
 This ain't what you promised."  
 I could've spoken out both sides of my mouth,  
 Lied to that handsome woman  
 About how I'm still the same person  
 I used to be, that just around the corner  
 Was going to be some  
 Blue lights and scandal. No.  
 No need to be  
 Pretending for this other version  
 Of who I once was when.

"This is it," I confessed. "Period. Face it:  
 Babies, bills, a man, a mortgage, utilities, groceries."  
 I thought. Now, no more truth to tell.  
 Do what you gotta. Go  
 If you must."