Vida Sever - Anja Glavinić

A Dry Place

thick

the family hair
spills over lunch
after we’ve become
weak and thin
my hair ends up in the plate
and pretends to be drowning
I silence it
with shyness behind my ear
the teeth are the answer
to the childish carelessness
when I splash water on the hair
bound around my waist
barely pulling out my hands
I offer them the remaining drops
with a firm poke
and the hair between their fingers
they crush the streets on the map
joking I’ll surely get lost in the city
as they clutch the hair
I laugh and unravel myself
from the kitchen
through the hall
and down the staircase
never dye your hair
I won’t.

the self

I was the tallest woman on trams
that are now time capsules
buried in my mother’s garden

says
the words that straighten up the body
grown out of a child’s blackness
after her mom died

she pulled out all the furniture
cut down the pine in the backyard
and buried all the familiar shapes
and postwar photos
in an apartment with fine edges
high up and far away
from her first words
the carved bedpost

above her head
fits a whole family at odds
each member in their own slit
going stone-gray
I can’t take the tram anymore,

but still no one is taller than me

says stroking the relief
of the family tree
and pressing the fallen leaves
into my fist

**transliteration**

our fingernails imprint apostrophes
into the plastic tablecloth
everyone says that it’s not a word
yet something more
stuck to the back side
but the family can’t read
so it connects us with thick tendrils
if we touch each other
for a moment we know
how to separate the words correctly

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