

J. Mae Barizo
Runner-up

Morning in a City

All new thoughts resemble remembrance, therefore all epiphanies are about forgetting: the notion, for instance,

that details cancel out the general effect of a moment, beauty concealed by particularities. The six windows for example,

or Haydn sonatas played by Pogorelich, or the sad indigo of a certain shirt. That the pianist's exaggerated bass notes

and shifts in tempi, the existence of such music in a room with crooked walls (triangle-shaped, almost) is a falling off from

a world which one cannot give birth to, a room of undiluted light. Or the sentiment that overindulgence is a signal of tastelessness

in Haydn but not in Ravel. Because there is no one thing where emotion corresponds in the same fashion as it does with another.

Just as there is no fixed reaction to this adagio or to the sound of the word *Dornauszieher* when it is spoken or not spoken. *One who extracts thorns.*

I thought about this in the early morning after the voice of my friend diminuendoed into dreaming, sparse sentences and all the while

the underlying ostinato of desire. The sky lightening to blueberry and my memory faltering: *Las Rocas, mimosa tree, a cloud-hung sky.*

Longing, because it is so full of passing places. You are so forgettable, my restless: your sing-songy mispronunciations, your hand slicing melon,

that painting that you love. Such tenderness, that sunlight and those sunrises
with his hand at my rib cage, our longing like a famine in a green country;

my childhood sonatas, limestone quarries I used to swim in where I caught
crayfish with my bare hands, the lilac tree and its thousand petal tongues.