

Oxidation: a trifecta of bodies

by Cody B Strange

I

I walk again among woods deader than me
into their hearts until the horizon becomes my halo as the rags of the sun are wrung
dry by the clouds, its drops melt the dirty snow beneath my feet
and my past disappears step by step.
I close my eyes until a time when I can't tell the difference between me and the contours of
this universe.
I recline in the sucking mud and watch the last leaf twitch like a heart in an open
chest, in winds
laden with rain. I have always loved sleeping in rain though I awake a handful of days
shorter.
I've lived a long life and not at all.
Come morning, I'll find again that I'm not so deep in the woods. Their hearts always seem much
denser from a distance.

⊙

I see you, cousin, standing there in the woods
your rusting skin is getting harder to spot
among the copse of coppered corpses.
Do you still remember when our parts were born? We became two very different
things:
cousin, you are alone, and my core is a blaze –
I want to hold and breathe you; I am here.
My brethren grow old too, I see Orion's lost his belt, Andromeda nurses broken wrists, now
freed from her chains gulped link by link somewhere in the unfurling spacetime it's like
watching a waterfall under the surface
there seems to be no end to the distance.
One day, cousin, we'll be the same,
alone together in a deader universe.

⊕

Child, it's getting dark, it's time to come home turn over your arthritic hands, see
–
your lifelines are getting shorted
your thoughts become ever more entangled caught in my crooked hair and fraying fingers.
Lay your head on my heart as you sink into my skin, hear the heat of my roiling core with a
you-shaped hole. They unearthed you from me, rearranged the parts but I will love you in
whatever form you are. Child, please, it's time or if not now, soon, I cannot stand to see



you weaken step by step, the distance between us has grown too much. When you finally join me, I will be waiting to enfold you in my arms and pour my life into yours

