

## **A patch of night**

*Luke Sawczak*

Originally published in [\*NōD\*](#)

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We flew into a patch of night  
masquerading as a cloud  
hovering over Europe,  
lit by the tips of our wings.

Nowhere do we look so bad  
as in an airplane washroom.  
The harsh light shrinks our pupils,  
eliminates the shadows that define us.

I won a game of chess  
against the airplane console,  
but I lost at Reversi.  
Battleship was a tie...

It shows me a picture of the world,  
marks the locations of day and evening.  
Frost forms on the outside of the glass  
and silver slivers pierce the night.

In my dream a woman addresses the dead,  
reaches into the dusk, tousles their hair.  
She is the mantle who awaits us.  
We have it easy up here.

I resist sleep and the moon tails us,  
snaking the river of Paris.  
The console scores the temperature:  
minus an abysmal number.

Below us I have heard it's burning hot.  
But above everything there's ice,  
above the country, or the earth,  
and below is lost in shadow.

## **You slip away**

*Luke Sawczak*

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I spoke. You heard no movement of air.  
I wondered, was I even there?

This is how you find out you're dead.  
You're driving home from church,  
you feel hungry but don't pull over.  
A friend calls you and though you hear them,  
all that comes through for them is silence.  
You, if they see themselves in you,  
are the reflection to their vampire,  
the bottom of the pool,  
and the refracted light.

Gradually you become quieter still.  
Your thumb no longer answers the call.  
Eventually, you run out of gas,  
you get out by the side of the road,  
you slip away as you lie down in the grass.