

MARGO LAPIERRE

Bear Skin Rug

A sea of land of fur —
 an island on the hardwood
 floor,
 soft raft with a killed face.

I was what was inside of it,
 where all these jags of teeth are not my teeth.

There is light
 over a man
 dressed as a girl,
 dressed as a bear,
 dressed as a rug.

Tolstoy would have loved this one:
 a fine piece of upholstery
 glaring back with yellow-gold orbs;
 I am still more dead than you.

I had a fat mother and a fat mother's fat —
 armpit and belly and breast,
 but still I preferred the bear
 skin rug.

And lice and heat and
 salmon blood —
 where did they go
 when you were set
 upon my floor?

I know you, old bear,
 I held on to your ears
 while playing Super Mario.

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 FILLING STATION #64

But what do I know?
What tides,
what ships,
what sailors,
what beary men and mummy shock of tongue?

The bear skin rug is a fur commune.
Its boundaries are closed.

If you were to sleep on my bear skin,
would you dream of burial? Would you
dream of sleep or forget to dream?

I protected you
from the husks that fluttered
empty on the edges of the sliding door;
mouths of a great furred
beast that wanted to part us.

The heifer's calf is coming now.
Look at you, all skin 'n' bones
Get yourself to the old oak
by the barn, you'll find the afterbirth.

Eat somethin' girl, skin 'n' bones,
skin 'n' bones, get your ass
off that bear's kin rug.

Papa, I have this bear,
but Papa bring me a fox
when you come back from killing.
Bring back the orphans
and make me a mother
of things that are wild.