

The Instant Before It Collapses And Is Promptly Forgotten
by Meg Wade

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1.

We understand the noise silence
makes inside our nervous kingdom.

The sound of water only apparent
when the river disappears.

You see, landscape calculates itself to make the figures stand out.

My long, black hair tangled around the faucet bleeds
moonlight into the kitchen, me
sitting on the counter by the half-full sink the last time
I let you
run your hands up my legs.

My throat bandaged so as not to reveal too much.

—Everything the light touches accepts a shadow.

Against a wall of oleander anyone can look like a miracle.

2.

The field braids a darkness (in me) I cannot contain.

You want my failures flung skyward, each one
skeet-shot, fastened with zip ties and string.

There are a million ways to smolder and none of them
feel careful.

Yes, I'm at the airport bar

No, I'm not flying today.

3.

I want to tell you something but my throat is full of snow.

4.

There is no one else in the room where I am, only fists
against a wall, like my body
clamoring loudly.

I'd like a trapdoor to escape through.

Whatever is growling in the attic to stop.

I've left a little trail of words along the floor
in hopes that you might find them, in hopes
that when you find them you'll know what the letters say—

I'm sorry

I'm sorry

Maybe I will sing for you tomorrow.