

**Kingdom Come**

*After the Idowa Crown (Late-nineteenth/mid-twentieth century)*

At first glance, you may imagine comets,  
stardust raining down in streams of colored  
beams—a spectrum—in every color that  
exists. He's king, and why shouldn't he have  
everything: the seen and unseen world. But  
if you could ask, if you could know the truth  
about what lies behind his youthful eyes—  
you would learn that all he wants is to rise  
and lose his tether to this world. To rise  
and float, to take flight, to go away like  
a beam of light lost in the night. Look here,  
lean in and see the birds have already  
arrived—they have come to his rescue. They  
have come to show him his rightful place in  
the sky with them. Where they fly at peace through  
space and in time to the songs of the dead  
composed in their heads. See their wings flutter,  
flutter upon his head. And when we turn  
away, will he vanish into the sea  
of sky like our lost dreams? This boy, the king,  
will find himself where he wishes to be.

## **This Is the Way the World Ends**

From the other side of the world a dazzling light approached. This is how the story will be told. At

first just a gleam, a tendril of light eclipsing the night. This is the way of the world, it was said.

A body at rest: eyes closed, skin the color of a new moon, a hue so bright you'd believe your own

body would glow in the pitch of night. This cannot be said. Moments later a bang was heard, few were

awake when it happened; a deafening whistle that rattled the brain—the world went mute. Then came a

heat—the heat of the world rose to meet the body's blood boil. This is when the body gives in to the

coming light. This is the will of our body. Our greasy coat peeled off, flesh gone to bone, muscles dried

out like severed ears or peach halves on the kitchen counter; flames licking fat, then split yellow wick shrinks

the body, split atoms leak, vaporize. Faces yawn into skulls. We will. We will. This cannot be

done. We be. We were. We sun. We become undone.

## Resurrection

*After the Coronation Stone of Motecuhzoma II*

I believe in resurrection—not the way the ghost of my lover’s uncle returned one morning as a translucent silhouette above our bed, his silent stare filled with the morning glare. Of course, there is always a way to come back. Look here, you’ll see those ancient ancestors whose story is written in a language like Latin, once alive and now dead. As if speaking with emojis, this is the language of Nahuatl—a language of Aztec, a people who ruled most of this planet in a time that seems so long ago, in what must have been a galaxy so far away. They were led by a ruler with a divine right to lead—sound familiar? The Aztec, a people of five million, larger than England, when the Earth was populated by 500 million. They understood there were periods in our lives that come and go—birth and rebirth—life is a tricky thing; the way an orchid will fade to stem and renew itself in another season. Look deep into the cracks of this stone, its figures carved have lived here for hundreds of years waiting to tell their story.