

Hide

by Ryan Phillips

and “and” it begins with “and.” Before so much preceded the little leaf felt feet disturb concrete suffocate set fire to grey burnt old earth wake. The leaf heeded the wind, flittered, bent, fell, orange, browned, it would fall, be plucked, my elder.

The houses pass slowly by
Stucco, tin, madera,
Tones and skin shift, blend
Sienna shadows of children
Bounce behind short, squeaking
Gates (green or pink or brown)
And myself and a hen,
Some iguana skin sliding
(Like it is still alive,
Leaps off the sidewalk
Atop a light current).

Shades of algodón and denim
We shared the same sauntering dust,
Rested in our crevices.
Folding the days work up
Peering at me
Peering at them
We know each other
Through sewing circle stories

One girl, never been in love,
Smells the curious sent
My oil passing
She hisses
And it is compliment.
Bent over to protect her
Is brother, indiscriminate
Memorizes me

Conscious, I pain road
Snap feet up with
Every touch of heat.
My breath mangles the air
Where the sidewalk pauses
For a moment, as if to peak
Over bent shoulder
Then toe around the bend again.
The shore slowly approaches

And I am skin and shadow
Burn and sputter. Passing heat.
A weighty veil, the tongue precedes
Stripping me, as others strip them.
The guts roam elsewhere

Brother, tense muscle,
Until the shadow leaves.
No trace left makes us safe
Alleviates identities
Until something is shared,
At least

The hide of my story will not be my invention

No matter how many
Long-winded kisses
I leave behind
Or apologetic cushions
I throw ahead
The weight of my steps
Cracks black walkway.
The fractures reach the deep potholes
Deep enough to suck in bodies lost in flood

A pair of boat sails catch
Wind of my approach
The pebbles crunching underfoot
Listen to jettisoned air
I return to the passing breeze;
But ropes pull the curtains down

To put the boat to sleep.
They have come too late.
Tonight I leave by bus
Spit out a few hours later

Comparative
Literature
major Ryan
Phillips has
traveled to
Europe, as
well as Central
and South
America.
His studies
focus on the
Modernist
period and
the work
of Joseph
Conrad.