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Death Follows

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Death Follows

Aubrey Cumberledge

once death finds you
he doesn't let you go
each time you think you've lost him
and turned enough shadowed corners
to rid yourself of the smell
of copper and what could have been
you find him in the sterile white light
of your sanctuary halls
you become paranoid
seeing him in the corner of your eye
hearing his raspy voice calling your name
in the echoes of distant conversations
feeling his too-warm skin
in every stranger
who bumps into you in crowded streets
you know Samarra is waiting for you
and yet
you still run
you still pack your things
and drive
not knowing where you're going
just trying to lose him on the open road
as if he can't
or won't
pursue
not in a silent hearse
a shiny black motorcycle
or a '59 Cadillac with its headlights off
he's the car that follows you
a little too close
a little too long
you almost think it's someone else
until you smell the fumes
of Hades' fire dripping from the exhaust
until the high beams blind you
and you're driving into the lights
speckled across your eyes
his presence is screaming
you know he's there
and he knows you know

death follows like an ex
who holds on too long
you've given him all the signs
you're over
you want to live your life
alone
and he doesn't care
he loves you
he hates you
he wants you all for himself
after famine and war ravage you
and pestilence has had his fun
death waits for you
patiently
a lover who always knew he'd win you in the end