

MIKE, WAITING, THE SMOKE AROUND YOUR HEAD CLOSING IN

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Your black-blue skin,
liquid lips licked raw
from looking.
You are waiting
for the whole district
to turn red
with light,
your chance
to let it go.

There is a woman
at the bar.
There is always a woman
at the bar.

You would say hello
but without the transfer
of money
what do you have
to offer?

This woman, laughing
at something
the man next to her has said
or done.
You walk by
and come close enough to smell
she smells good

and you melt a little.

You order another whiskey
on the rocks
only because you like
saying
"on the rocks."

You look at her
again,

dollar signs
in your eyes,

fire
under your fingernails.