

THE WATCHMAN

In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month on the fifth day, while I was among the exiles by the Kebar River, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

-Ezekiel 1:1

Once I saw a wheel of eyes
moving toward me like his spirit,

metal ignited white
with holy fire,

bitter words
left lingering in my mouth,

scroll of tears and sorrow
churning in my body,

my static body left,
for you.

I see their faces
in my dreams,

like dice rolling toward me,
the face who was me—

I came to tell you
how you live.
sweet words for bitter,

I am not of this world,
this seed reborn

or lost
among the harvest—

like arrogance blossoming
in the stillness,

tarnished in the fragrance
you keep from Him.

He is the wings beating
under the expanse,

the lightening
out of fire,

the melted blue sapphire that flows
through my veins

the words you tear
like wild animals.

I paid in days
for years,

I traded reality for iron
and pleasure for defilement,

sweet words for bitter,
like the stings of you,

my city defiled,
my chasing in the wind.

—Bethany Bates

