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A Room at Least

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John Grey

The Couple's First Morning

The woman
lies on the bed
in pale motel light.
The man in the bathroom
shaves and sings.

Like a lit match,
the sound of him
warms and illuminates a little.

Her eyes move calmly
from stomach to chin,
from breast to thigh.
She's reassuring herself that
nothing has changed from the night before,
that her shape has held up,
that her beauty is safe where it is.

He enters the room
and it's like that match
has been instantly blown out.
She blames a sudden breeze.
Better that than a sudden doubt.

A Room at Least

A guy has to live somewhere.
So it's one room in
an inner city boarding house
with a landlady who smokes

and coughs and complains
about her swollen feet.
The bed is lumpy.
The wall paper's peeling.
But existence, at least,
now knows where to find me.