

SMOKE

When the mountains stared at our backs,
it was my mother who read the sky, its cobalt
glass full of moisture. The clouds formed

a necklace at the summit. If I could remember
the smell I would describe this as well – though
I do recall the smoke trying to join with the clouds,

each tendril plume learning to fly. These birds
of smoke released themselves from the dung
hut-chimney as my body rested on her back.

Braced in the sling of her shawl she sang
in a language I no longer recognise
but can identify from sound. Like water.

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