Two Poems by Larry D. Thacker

Larry D. Thacker

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In a town

In a town like this, mountain-edged, hemmed in with never drying streams of pills and that smell of a little meth always hanging in the air off a thin couple’s coats at the convenience store, a new jagged pile of some newly deceased user’s belongings stacked at the rental’s curbside appears, resting there rotting suddenly, overnight maybe, or dropping out of the sky while you’re at work, forgotten for a week, maybe two, near everything they owned when they were found dead, the same guys as usual hired out for the same routine, mindlessly dragging what’s left in the unit to the corner (there’s money to be made) for the city to magically dispose of whenever they manage unless it catches fire and saves them the trouble:
couch, loveseat, bed frame, box springs, mattress, lamp, coffee table, bedding, rugs, trash bags of clothes, bicycle tire, towels, a long dead fern.
Walking by, it doesn’t stink
of something in there, giving
a terrible odor, but smells
of something vital, long missing.
Preparing the Chapel

*Icons hate the dark,* Irene McKinney told us, and they do, though without voice and light we guess for them, assuming

our own anxieties and fears of the time, of dark and death and bills and bankruptcies, all of it lifted up as sacred to translate as inanimate raw spiritual material for corralling our fears into a room full of yet-lit candles where we’re encouraged to pray regularly

over generations in the desert as things crumble to a sufficiently decrepit state, staring eye-to-eye at a thing that won’t blink first, never, never.