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Independent scholar

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The walk

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day

The businessman eats a panino. Pistons steam and hiss. The girl with wings on her eyes fans herself with paper and rubs cream over a tattoo on her arm. Her eyes fly away with the midday train and sun erodes the tiles that nobody has ever walked on. The people in here are already dead. The piazza swelters in the blind afternoon and only trees will survive. Clothes flap on empty balconies, vines grow in stone bridges, garbage splits bags wide open, the underpass only leads to more concrete. Old men on step ladders restore the insides of dilapidated buildings— you can see through the holes, all the way to the sea

night

The welcome house won't let you in after 21:45. Pigeons lodge in the citadel's dark walls. They watch chefs put down knives and go out to smoke. Behind you the moon rises through the old town archway. It rises over the rooftops, and not even the boy circling on his bicycle

can stop it. People drink on every corner. They drink inside. The pizza man has no customers. He watches football on a small tv. You pass in and out of streetlights. A woman on the footpath recognises your eyes, and gives you some grapes. She does not speak, walks with you a little

The crescent moon reclines, watching a star. You are alone once more. The night turns a key that breaks in the door. The mausoleum waits at the end of town. The flower shop waits beside the mausoleum. A thunderstorm clears the narrow streets. You follow a little man, who scurries up the church tower to show you where you will sleep