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Bogeyman

Bogeyman lives next door.
No house, just thistle
and ripgut brome
behind a chain link fence.
He carries the smell of mold,
loads his lever-action rifle
with slow-expanding slugs,
twists his body into terrible shapes,
whispers my name.
He talks to palm rats
in their language,
has jackfruit skin,
a voice quiet as a tile saw.
The wandering soul
of a dead person,
he lives as a bat
with the face of a terrier
who preys on poultry and children.
He is a politician who eats hunks
of his mother between slices
of fresh sourdough.
I've tried to chase him,
but he skitters away.
When I tire of tracking him
he wheels and flies at me.
Not just another boggard,
no lord of the underworld,
he is reincarnated
from intestinal gas
of Pulcinella
in an ancient commedia.
An amusement park train slows
as it passes by a diorama
lit by flickering oil lamps.
Lips protruding,
breast sacks drooping—
Bogeyman in wax.
Whenever I open a door,
place keys on a hook,
or stand at my window,
he is there.
I get little rest.