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## Flame

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**Flame**

By: Brad Jasko

Pressing down on the black plastic,  
I pull the trigger and it clicks;  
no flame at the end of the barrel.

I press the stick lighter again, it clicks, and I can hear  
a quiet whir inside its blue body,  
springs probably rising inside to move butane  
and spark flint, then the flame  
rushing through the barrel  
like a bullet from a gun. I harken back  
to my ancestors obsessed  
with fire and heat, the glorious danger  
and awe a simple flame imposes on our lives,  
and I just admire the flame for a moment.

In this cold dorm room  
I could use all the warmth I could get.  
Guiding the flame over to a candle,  
the charred wooden wick shaped like an 'x'  
catches the flame. A pool of gray wax  
begins to edge its way towards the wall of glass,  
fake freedom, and I can already smell redwood in the air.

I stretch my back in my black chair  
after not getting enough sleep last Friday night,  
turning my head to the right as I lift up my arms  
in a 'y' like that YMCA dance we all did in high school  
and curl my fingers toward my palms,  
my silver ring shining with the light  
from the frigid snow outside.