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the day after

Autumn Thompson

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the day after

Autumn Thompson

my eyes squint in the blinding light of the early afternoon sun
bottles all across the counter
a spilled drink on the coffee table
half-eaten cardboard pizza, still in its box as if it was just delivered
my favorite plant knocked over—her soil litters the ground like confetti
it might as well be

i sit in the silence that weighs
no voices shout to change the song, footsteps stumbling in suit to reach the
remote
laughter echoes in the walls of my two-bedroom apartment
no strangers shouting up from the ground floor, raising their respective
completely non-suspicious fast food cups in our direction
no drunken dancing, twirling, spinning two-step to some song i don't quite
remember the words to

no
today it is just me
surrounded by ghosts shaped as littered blankets and the bodies taking the
form of red plastic cups they left behind
i am filled with an odd sensation
a warmth that fills me more completely than the alcohol ever could
sinking into the couch, i notice the way the pillows are arranged
there is nothing more human than celebration

celebration of what?
i'm not too sure
friendship? old times? memories of days not so long past?
it doesn't matter
i glance at the vacuum that looms in the corner
not yet
maybe just a few more minutes
then
i'll sweep up the memories from many long nights past
and put them away for safe keeping

Autumn Thompson is a third-year biology student on the pre-professional health plan with a minor in psychology and nutrition. Writing started as a once-in-a-while hobby in high school, and now she continues to write as a way to express herself and to interpret the human experience.