

When the Basilica Roof Brooded*

By: Sabrina San Miguel

Swept needles from the cedar tree
thrown towards earth
with such force
neighboring villages
hushed babies.
Heard pleading through
rib-caged walls—
did not intervene.
Mangled tendons
tensions too,
hanging by a thread.
The day we fled,
the basilica roof brooded
hoped new sanctuary
heated well,
contained the laughter.
Basted her brown butter tilework
with saguaro flower essence.
The kind used to remind
the fatherless they remain whole.
Smudged the empty space.
Coaxed open reluctant blinds
exhausted from hiding
tapestry woven of
bone marrow and lost thyme.
Recalled the oath to remain rooted—
that was before the pillaging.
Before the crow-pecked trenches,
how the home bled to death.
The day we departed
ghost pipes gathered in clusters.
Lamented over peaceful decay
that stained the cream walls.
Bowed their heads in agreement—
that leaving was all I could do to survive.

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