

Poets

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Sundown

The first room we share has a window facing west that swallows the coin of the sun. The antenna atop the next roof casts a lizard's shadow on our skin every winter afternoon. Gila monster, stick insect, chimera. Those long February days strange women ask after you, and I hammer the story into shape. Everything's one more guess in the dark. I pull you down around my ears like a hat. The women lurk on the fire escape, fight me for the last book on the library shelf, warn me these things don't always work out. We shoot a game of pool around a woman in a trenchcoat who checks your pants for quarters. What did you do that they service you with such envy? They all want to know who I am, but cut their eyes when I say: I come from the east, I am the juggler of oranges and knives, I the red-handed harlequin, the cat with stripes and spots, queen of tripwire. I don't know what I'll do when I get my hands on you.