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## Once Life

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# *Once Life*

By Brittany Mann

I stared into the glass eyes  
of a stiff face drooping  
with the moment it realized  
the admiration of mishappen circles  
lasts in the unstitchable  
threads of practice of age  
the things he did not give

A once life mounted  
on the wall of profit  
its antlers for pride  
a father died  
before me, the child  
lost hugs unrelenting  
as if from a tree  
lost a nod to the path  
a body in the shape  
of midges and sun streaks  
glowing orange  
pick themselves into  
homicidal air

Stale tobacco smells

like a taxidermy smile