

The Guard

King Tut, five-foot-six, lies supine on mould-flecked cotton,
ceiling-transfixed. Body broken
like he'd been struck by lightning.

Dead at nineteen, before the purpose,
before the remark. My avatar. In my last teen year,

my man tried to kill me with a Volkswagen. Rammed
my spine with grille, reversed to gain momentum.
I leapt from light, body split from spirit—
ba left ha. Fractures don't kill, but heal with an echo
wedged in the chasm. The Valley of the Kings,

I imagine, is located in the foreground of a photograph
wall mural from *Sears*, beneath the mountain
at its lowest ridge. You can tear the world off
by its corner and ball it up in your arms;
that's all it is. I lied for a decade. The universe

got hitched, had quints, got divorced, pitched over, while
I ruminated in my bed about hot knives. I described
my crypt to a doctor who put a
gun-trigger hand sign at his temple: "You feel 'pow pow'
sometime?" No...the opposite. For self to reenter,

reanimate my shell, like the blockbuster CGI
storm cloud can reset the hero's bone back in line.
Instead, my ex-love became security guard, a bored
protector of goods against longing. Who wouldn't
rather camouflage than change? But grief has an unknown half-life,

and I've been resin'd in a vault
of magical thinking—that I can
spell-cast superstition into art.

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