

## IN THE SHADOW CITY...

the parks stretch smaller, in narrower bands, man-made but de-manned, abandoned so stone

amphitheaters hold audience to moss  
and overstuffed ducks shit mines across

fields, down the banks of the human-made lake  
where the ripples crack the brown necks and make

the feathers rust because there

in the shadow city, blue and white squares cling  
to toppled branches, fight the tow of the swollen cedar

creek as it cascades over WPA-hewn stairs, bottles  
and cigarette butts making anchor in grass harbors.

Willows clog the eroded shore, stone precipice;  
they slide back, hollow rivulets and crevasses

where roots plunge exposed to shield tires, the pipe,  
tendrill-covered, from which a charcoal-green stripe

slashes through foam for there

in the shadow city there is no through-the-looking-glass  
like here where on every corner your reflection

greet you because there at the park's edge silhouettes  
of heads wait in office building windows where glass

reflects sky, the shadows of a smoggy sun  
cast down one path plus one path the sum

of which emerges from the trees, connects with concrete  
curb-banks, a macadam river as incomplete

as the overturned paddle boats

on the dock as the scrape of gravel on the empty track.  
In the shadow city, when stones crunch beneath soles

one gull, with two-beat wings, will perch upon a pole,  
not a swan or crane, the ducks and geese will raise

a rhythmic, shrill sound; then silence. A blast  
of thrashed air under wing as if the lake cracked

open and rose into the air where, since it is the shadow  
city you will see but two towers yellow and blue, two bows

drawn taut, or two spokes

around which the shadow city turns unlike here where two  
towers cause nothing but stillness, are nothing but shadow.

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