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Hot Flash

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The hot flash wakes me in the dark,
A pool of sweat between my breasts, cooling.
I throw off the covers.
The heat dissipates,
Radiating into the room
Warmth and moisture,
Electrons and quarks.

The gift of my middle age, this nocturnal blaze.
Awake, I stoke the fire.
Some nights, sorrowful, I kiss my broken scraps
And offer them as kindling.
I pile on unloved fears, grateful for release.
Some nights, I rage through the house
Searching for hidden disappointments
To set on fire.

What I have longed for,
What I have desperately held,
I toss on the heap.
Content, I lay, as they are consumed.
Till I remain only

A flame

A point of light

Afire.