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## Disorder

Erica Reid

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# DISORDER

Erica Reid

*Matthew Olzmann selected "Disorder" for the 2021 Yellowwood Poetry Prize. He writes, "With its winged bellhops, Magma Boots, and meteors that strike the Earth like a chocolate orange, "Disorder" lays a keen and whimsical imagination over a steady current of anxiety and despair. This is a poem that's not interested in merely telling its reader about an experience; instead, it seeks to create an experience. The poem is an event: tonally complicated, figuratively ambitious, equally fueled by both wonder and dread."*

A recent season of dreams has made it clear  
that I prefer a hellscape where I understand the rules  
to a paradise where I do not.

How can it be a paradise  
if even here I cannot make my mother smile? No —  
I am forced to ring the winged bellhop and say: sorry  
to trouble you but this must be a web of someone else's  
desires. I hold a single hope. It takes very little to see  
that this heaven is not for me.

In a better dream, a meteor  
whacks the earth like a chocolate orange.  
While my eighth grade classmates quake and scramble  
I stand at the head of the school bus, shouting  
through the bullhorn I seem to carry in dreams:

*This* is what finally frightens you? No —  
chaos and I go way back. I will chart our path, teach you  
what I have lived. Now lace up the Magma Boots  
I asked you to bring, line up according to height. Follow me

into hostile terrain. If the trauma feels overwhelming,  
step one is to give it a name.

ERICA REID (she/her) is a Colorado poet with an Ohio heart. She is an MFA  
candidate at Western Colorado University.