## **Martin Robertson**

## Back Room, 1944

Riven temper runs along the table like a ladder down a stocking, like flame along dry wood. But flame is beautiful —more like the ladder in the stocking, wrecking the firm silk. He's a fool and she's hysterical and one no longer cares to put a rough thought into kinder words or keep it silent. And at all our sides sits the empty place of absent love. And at all our backs (our comfortable backs) thunders war with all those deaths of others. And that huge violence flickers in that void with the little ugly flame of temper.

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