

Nightly Feats of Survival

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The infinite sky's shrunk into a rectangle of wan light, the earth
cradling the captive like a clam clasps its pearl,

like a saddle the horseback. Guards French-kiss walkie-talkies,
the distance between their mouths & ears

perfectly measuring this man's imprisonment, orders trembling
before vaulting from lips like skydivers,

like the stillborn laugh at a funeral's pregnant pause. At twilight,
luckless mosquitoes compose a symphony

of notable splotches on the tents' canvas flaps, gruff settlers
crawling into makeshift sleeping bags

like hermit crabs sheltering within jetties' crags, in the brief oasis
of a tidepool. At dawn, they plan to drag him

to a 1-ring circus town packed with spoiled brats & 2-star hotels,
to collect the finder's fee, a shower of bills

like bats dazzling them with their acrobatics, their looping feasts
nightly feats of survival; but instead,

bullets whiz by like blackflies, the ambushed dusk delivering him
into a dizzying tapestry of pinprick stars.