

Seraphina, Burning One
Ryan Prior

The night before the Eagles played the Demons
We Demons held a bonfire—a primitive séance in the woods
With drumbeats and dance and Eagles in effigy burned
Dad dropped me off
And I disappeared in the crowd, by flickering fire finding faces of friends

“I can’t wait to see you tomorrow,” Rebekah had said
Just an hour before
“I love you,” she had said
And I said it back, meaning it

Eyes widened with welcoming warmth
Sam and Joe and Sera caught my squinting gaze
We stomped, we chanted, Demon praise to the Blaze
We Shivered in gusts that threw clouds over the moon
But by the heat of the flames we Believed

Walking down Fairways Drive, my arm about Bekah’s waist
Just last Friday
On the Wilson’s long porch we could almost see
Our brood bouncing balls and spilling lemonade

I glanced left and Sera grinned, eyes alight with fiery glint
Conversation carried us toward the stadium
Where Demons and Eagles poised to fight
An exhibition in my heart tonight

The eon since seems eons less than that endless moment in longing
Spent. Alone ourselves between grandstands between friendship and a little more

She’d tied birthday balloons to my locker
That past Tuesday
Joking and giggling in the hall, we consumed
Flame-shaped sandwiches she’d made just for me