Christmas Parade

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Liz Williams

My dad takes me to the parade again, to the same patch of snowy grass where we’ve stood for decades now, our feet the living, moving extremities of roots beneath the ground.

In front of us, a tiny body floats atop his father’s shoulders and screams in primitive delight as blaring red lights slice the nickeled sky.

He lifts a miniature fist to the air and calls out “firetruck!” the chaotic bliss of seeing his dreams embodied, alive, in motion, tickling his tender soul.

Swollen cheeks peek from fur-trimmed hoods, and I cannot help but wonder— how did I get used to this? How did I ever get used to life?