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## Cyclone

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# Cyclone

Mary Dengler

Amid debris and ash, the billowing clouds of smoke,  
Holding his camera as careening legs  
Allowed, the doctor took us all to hell,  
And spoke:  
"I hope I live. I hope I live."  
Then safely we emerged to watch the reruns  
Of the hurling jet alive  
With screaming victims fastened to their seats  
Inside to make a bomb  
To bring our institution smashing down  
To flesh enmeshed  
With steal.

Scene one, like films that quench our thirst  
For flame, was followed by a second, this time  
Hurling greater balls of fire, more shocking than the first.  
Excited, breath suspended, we  
Anticipated two climactic falls,  
Imploding one and two and down  
Like Titans Zeus had overthrown  
And felt our thirst began to cry for  
More, for three  
And four.  
"The Pentagon has just been struck,"  
We heard. A third attack.

Just as audiences silently agree  
When prologues to a plot and epic simile  
Go on too long for sense  
And special effects are over played,  
We hungered for the story line, when anticipated  
Number four flew purposefully to Pennsylvania's lonely field.  
There, like a Trojan torn with conflict between man  
And god, it was hurried to the Land of Death beneath  
The silent sod.

Returning from the routine toil that separates us  
From the daily shows, we dashed  
To take our seats expecting five  
And six had crashed. Instead we heard  
The chorus give the word, provide the light that we,  
Begun in medias res, were blinded to.  
Their guesses made us wonder who, what  
Author, wrote this play, this script, and  
In the context of the skies, if grand  
Narratives that we held  
Sacred, were a pack of lies.

The theater darkened from the silent screen, we hurried  
To a sun-drained parking lot  
Without the called-for words—  
“Was that the strangest plot  
You’ve ever seen?”  
Then home to see reviews by critics round  
The world, with internal shaking  
And an acrid taste, a mind  
Bereft of focus or clear view,  
The sound of reassuring flags.  
We felt the impact of the opening scene  
Of what would be the longest made-for-tv  
Work, original in scope, religious  
Philosophical in theme.

Uncanny how it fills our dream,  
Our thoughts—why just last night I  
Dreamed I woke to coiled debris and smoke,  
As thrashing from my bed I  
Saw four cones descending from the sky.  
“No warning. Going to die.” I thought.  
Is God, like Zeus, offended that I tell  
But half a truth, don’t hate  
The homosexual, laugh at Doctor Ruth and think abortion just  
A symptom of idolatry,  
Like pride?  
But I’ve confessed these lurid sins for which you said you died.

Rushing through the rooms  
I searched for Mother, dead these many years,  
Seizing her from off the floor, her shins  
And feet encased in osteoporotic boots,  
And dragged her through the basement doors to fall  
Uncharted depths beneath imploded floors of what was once  
A small two-storied house, amid  
The howls and hoots of helpless hurling souls.

Awake at three I paced the floor  
To Truth. “I thought we understood each other,” I complained.  
“You keep Your part by spreading out Your wings to stop  
All those evil things from coming to this  
Holy Land. I keep mine by believing  
That you do.” I can’t go  
Back to black and white, the make-believe on film,  
The truth on sight.  
I look within, without, like Kurtz,  
And cry “The horror”  
Of the human heart.  
And to the God belied By Church  
I sigh for my old faith  
Outgrown.