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3 A.M. Grocery Shopping

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3 A. M. GROCERY SHOPPING

At 3 a.m.

I am the solitary walker of bread aisles
I am the only one who probes the now not so fresh sushi

The freezer aisle makes me speculate what age will feel like
as its coldness singses my skin.

The cereal aisle consoles me with childhood familiarity
marshmallows, toys, and lots of sugar.

I roam every aisle...
at a loss for what I am seeking.

The list I clutch is precise:
bananas, milk, whole-wheat bread,
and maybe some shrimp if it's on sale
but I can't follow the list exclusively -
tired of its structure
tired of oatmeal for breakfast and PB and J for lunch
I find something I hadn't thought of,
something I hadn't needed.

couscous
it seems daring, it seems foreign,
It's not on the list

I buy couscous at 3 a.m. and I wonder,
will this change my life?

with obscure excitement,
I toss the box of couscous in my cart
I return to the list,
I've taken destiny into my own hands:
the predetermination of the list did not shackle me
wholly.
I will have couscous for dinner because I elected it

I stand feet away from the checkout aisle
knowing that I will return home soon,
return to college applications, homework, and "to-do" lists.
I will return to maturity, responsibility, and age
I stand feet away from the checkout aisle,
on the heel of my cart
and I push myself.
I fly one final time.