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The Wild Hunt

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My breath slows under my command. I focus on it. Become it. Fall into it. Fall. My limbs sink into the cushion of my dorm mattress. As my mind clears and my breath slows, it feels like my legs are being covered in a weighted blanket. The weight progresses up my legs, to my hands, then my chest, until my head is all that is above water. I focus on one question. One plea to my gods. “O’ great hunter, let me ride with you this night.”

My consciousness slips away from my body, just like I have practiced for years. I float above my flesh and blood. A distant thunder rolls across the city, but then it does not stop. It falls into rhythm. Thump thump thump. Hooves.

I hear a command through my astral form and reach my spiritual arm up into the air. I am yanked through the walls of my dorm and up above the clouds. When the movement stops, I realize I am riding on a skeletal horse, with the powerful Hunter holding the reigns. Behind us races the army of the dead, traveling the globe to their pit stop into reincarnation. They stare. They know I do not belong on this ride. But I hold the place of honor.

I look down on the tops of Winthrop buildings. Then the Charlotte skyline. Then cities that I have never taken the time to learn. Then the monuments of my native D.C. Then the ocean, sliding by endlessly under our gasty horde.