Kingdom Come

*After the Idowa Crown (Late-nineteenth/mid-twentieth century)*

At first glance, you may imagine comets, stardust raining down in streams of colored beams—a spectrum—in every color that exists. He’s king, and why shouldn’t he have everything: the seen and unseen world. But if you could ask, if you could know the truth about what lies behind his youthful eyes—you would learn that all he wants is to rise and lose his tether to this world. To rise and float, to take flight, to go away like a beam of light lost in the night. Look here, lean in and see the birds have already arrived—they have come to his rescue. They have come to show him his rightful place in the sky with them. Where they fly at peace through space and in time to the songs of the dead composed in their heads. See their wings flutter, flutter upon his head. And when we turn away, will he vanish into the sea of sky like our lost dreams? This boy, the king, will find himself where he wishes to be.
This Is the Way the World Ends

From the other side of the world a dazzling light approached. This is how the story will be told. At first just a gleam, a tendril of light eclipsing the night. This is the way of the world, it was said.

A body at rest: eyes closed, skin the color of a new moon, a hue so bright you’d believe your own body would glow in the pitch of night. This cannot be said. Moments later a bang was heard, few were awake when it happened; a deafening whistle that rattled the brain—the world went mute. Then came a heat—the heat of the world rose to meet the body’s blood boil. This is when the body gives in to the coming light. This is the will of our body. Our greasy coat peeled off, flesh gone to bone, muscles dried out like severed ears or peach halves on the kitchen counter; flames licking fat, then split yellow wick shrinks the body, split atoms leak, vaporize. Faces yawn into skulls. We will. We will. This cannot be done. We be. We were. We sun. We become undone.
Resurrection

After the Coronation Stone of Motecuhzoma II

I believe in resurrection—not the way the ghost of my lover’s uncle returned one morning as a translucent silhouette above our bed, his silent stare filled with the morning glare. Of course, there is always a way to come back. Look here, you’ll see those ancient ancestors whose story is written in a language like Latin, once alive and now dead. As if speaking with emojis, this is the language of Nahuatl—a language of Aztec, a people who ruled most of this planet in a time that seems so long ago, in what must have been a galaxy so far away. They were led by a ruler with a divine right to lead—sound familiar? The Aztec, a people of five million, larger than England, when the Earth was populated by 500 million. They understood there were periods in our lives that come and go—birth and rebirth—life is a tricky thing; the way an orchid will fade to stem and renew itself in another season. Look deep into the cracks of this stone, its figures carved have lived here for hundreds of years waiting to tell their story.