You're Trailing Yourself

Kevin Devine

The sputtering blink of the street lamp
Makes you taller, then shrinks you, then splits you in half
So you're trailing yourself on your walk to the pay phone
Your pockets weighted down with quarters and the hope that no one's home
You spray paint cinnamon on vines and key the cars you pass by
Your ears burn and your voice don't sound right

So you spend the next week playing weakened
Rolling three men alone in the dark of your kitchen
Your apartment can't talk so it's safe for your secrets
All the stories you've invested with a masochist, menacing meaning
Those tired tricks that you play to graph the life to your name
And you know it's not yours but for now it's okay

You wake and cut your initials in cheap glass
To mark a space for yourself when your time here has passed
When you're drifted and done, trading danger for distance
All those rocks that rope your neck are finally nameless and weightless and faceless
And you strip the sting from the stains that bleed the life from your face
Your cheeks will burn red on a pure perfect day

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