San Antonio Review

Ghost Drafting

Joshua Hamilton

Published on: Apr 21, 2021

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I wipe clean mantelpiece
polish blank the mirrors
scrape cold ash of fireplace
so the dead starve in their hollow
halls — remembrance
as negative renovation
stripping bare living rooms, patios, and kitchen
into one long corridor:
interior design of
four gray lines
to infinity, almost
touching, a throng
of fading ghosts between.

We please the living — stuff them
with electricity, air conditioning,
computers — their half-life
of milliseconds feverishly tapped
like a chain smoker's faulty lighter
her last ember
already cooling in the gravel.

The wraiths
trail ever on a thinner filament –
always fading
but never
erased.

Joshua Bridgwater Hamilton is a Louisville, KY native who migrated to Corpus Christi with his family, where he teaches Spanish. Between Kentucky and Texas, he has traveled and lived in several places, including Spain, Appalachia, Panamá, Peru, the Philippines, and the Colorado River. He has two chapbooks: *Rain Minnows* (Gnashing Teeth Publishing), and *Slow Wind* (Finishing Line Press), and his poetry appears in such journals as *Windward Review*, *Driftwood*, *Voices de la Luna*, *Tiny Seeds Journal*, and *Sybil Journal*.