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Jupiter, Dave, The Turtles and The Tube
for the field and the creek, abiding

It's always an accident, it's always supposed
to stay in a clean lab and never mix with
the dirty children of sluttish ecology. It's always

a marketing man, who is sometimes a woman,
sparkling with promise, thinking of the dead green
of dollars, saying "we can roll this out by next

Christmas, totally non-toxic, wears off in six hours.
But for those six hours your little princess can glow.
like she's made of moonbeams and fairy farts.

It's not even the kid market where the money is.
It's the tweens and teens, all they do is make videos.
This stuff looks fantastic in high definition.

Once we've got it in paintable body glitter form,
no one's going to want to use anything else." One child
will get this shine, a child who loves

Jupiter, the creek, their parents, who finds a tube
of sparkles left behind, still with the seal on.
It's not stealing if you take it off the bathroom floor

before you wipe down the stalls, it's cleaning.
Reduce, reuse, recycle. Then one night of
digital cartwheels that leave lingering blue auroras,

looking so much like animation the parents think perhaps
they won't share them online yet.
The next afternoon, the precious bottle falls

into slick creek water, child tears at the loss fluorescing faintly.
Because life is like that, there's something in that blend
of amino acids, euryarchaeotes, bioluminescent compounds

that tastes to a turtle like the best bag of cheap dog food
scattered on the creek to gather them for the kiddies.
Sometimes life is lucky. That creek belongs

(according to the register of deeds) to Dave, who
never minded kids playing down in there as long as the
teenagers cleaned up their own bottles and butts.

In his other life Dave was accustomed to discretion,

so he didn't call the news, the wildlife patrol,
the exotic animal store, just went down there

after sunset, to watch the turtles grow fat
off everything their light drew to them,
dug them a pond to spawn in safely,

unaware yet of the rabbits that would
grow living wigs deep enough to bury your arm in,
refracting the smallest scraps of light,

safe to shave once a month and no harm done.
In the heat of summer, about when the
fish poop had turned oilslick colors,

accumulated enough deep in the water table,
the ecologists wanted to blame Dow Chemical.
Dow swore it was sabotage, libel and lies.

So the waiting world began watching for what would gleam next,
waiting for it to mean cancer, or mass fish die-offs.
Some would still eat meat, but the plants glistened

with the same primrose blue against their greens and oranges.
Done can't be undone. A person now named Jupiter
wore long sleeves on hot days, because they didn't want the tabloids

to capture the neon running along their veins, through
their heart like they had fireflies for white cells and anglerfish
in their marrow. They preferred the company of the turtles,

who still liked dog food, had decided they
were cousins of the creek, not to be snapped at but
danced with, in shallow water, where the silt glittered

powdered pyrite. The moss was a bank of blue flame.
The fireflies tried to make love to the ferns until
only the ones with better sense lived to tell.