

Silent Flame

By Ashley Victor

If only burnout was akin to the forest fire it invokes.
White hot heat and char,
the cracking of trunks 100 years in the making,
an outward display of the chaos within.

Instead it is a slow roast.
A seemingly inconsequential ember
that eats at your rotted roots
leaving nothing but scars below the surface
where the foundation once stood.
And if left unattended
it stealthy ascends the trunk,
clearing the rings that make us whole.
Until all that remains is our carefully constructed bark.

A hollow reminder
of the heat we couldn't control.