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### **Pareschatology**

*doctrine dealing with matters after death  
but before the end of the world*

Most of the dead don't brood  
on the manner of their leaving,  
they don't hate or lust;  
their lack of glands leaves them  
content to float in the aether,  
and drift like fallen leaves  
in the wind. They are curious  
about the passions of the living,  
watch for a while when intensity  
snags their attention but don't  
consider the way empty jackets  
hang, nor how it used to feel  
to have sensitive fingers.  
Time has no meaning for them,  
they don't get bored but slowly  
dissipate as the last vestige  
of will fades.

The few who lived  
in anticipation of Judgment Day  
cling together, resist drifting,  
made uneasy by a feeling  
of something missing.

They don't know what.

## Silverbacks at the Bar

*I look at their almost identical butts;  
their buddy hunched shoulders,  
Ruth Stone, 'Male Gorillas'*

They defend the territory.  
Shoulders close gaps, signal  
a collective no. They growl  
and hoot at incursions, return  
to grooming and grunting.  
The waitress looks tired  
of serving them, bares her teeth  
at their jibes, makes it look  
like a smile. Needs the work.  
They lean in, slap and punch  
each other, sway apart and shout  
at the screen on the wall.  
Pay attention: watch the faces  
in the mirror, the tremble  
in the long glass. You'll hear  
the unvoiced cries:  
*I don't know how to live  
in this world  
I'm lost*