THE WORLD BENEATH

poem by Devon Balwit

Image: "All of Us" by Lou Storey. "The World Beneath" was written by Devon Balwit for *Rattle*'s Ekphrastic Challenge, April 2023, and selected as the Editor's Choice. (PDF / JPG)

Peel the disappointed world
back to its precursor—a child's

town of bright primaries, streets
where the sun finds no impediment

and the wind none richer,
none poorer. No one suffers

or dies there—not even one
invisible dog sniffing the blue

salt air. The boats in the harbor,
the phone poles, the hills

and the houses all speak
a language before language,

that tuneful hum above
the shapes in a board-book.

There even shadows hesitate
to fall, mother nowhere

in sight, the afternoon lazy
and long.

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