



They Tried to Cover Her Up

by Stephanie Shlachtman

She witnessed the induction of matter into everything, and they, too, witnessed the induction of matter into everything; a constitution for the cosmos. But that was eons ago when the quiet creases

in her dress were fresh, the hemline a proper length. (They were afraid of those curls: Those curls would turn to spider silk in fifteen years or so; a girl who can look you in the eyes speaks volumes—too

loud.) And now, Canis Major endeavors to ascribe her effulgence to its unfettered glow, now that she, too, is a constellation. Now that she, too, can fill the space without

apology. How did night not see her (of course, it did) on the lens of a telescope, when “all luminaries” did not mean “all luminaries,” when her painted elements were immured by skylights in a nebula. When her little lights

cried, her older ones, too. When her little lights died, her older ones, too, because of disproportional brushstrokes, because of unequal distances to and from the sun.

Image: “Indietro” by Marc Alan Di Martino. “They Tried to Cover Her Up” was written by Stephanie Shlachtman for *Rattle*’s Ekphrastic Challenge, February 2020, and selected as the Artist’s Choice.