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Sostenuto

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Sostenuto

Micah Beukelman

Three pedaled feet.

one—dampens all, fluid, blended

two—singular staccato, short, sharp

three—dampens individual, muffled, shrouded

I lay under the feet

Once I was one

layered and lifted, soft and melodic

Then I was two

rapid hammer strikes, precise, brief

Finally, three.

ringing ethereal, sustained, prolonged

A seat of four legs, hollowed in the middle— that’s where I lay.

I stay in the space below myself, below the pedals, lined with felt and lowered down. Six feet under, six inches away from the keys, there’s no difference to be had. It’s neither a coffin nor a piano but both. The lid is closed and the sound stops, dampened with the third foot. Surrounded by ivory bone and wood, paper skin and ink blood. Scrawled on my wrists are ledger lines,
scars as notes.

My key signature is a flatline.