

After Some Time

The bodega would still be burning
for days after we're gone.

The milk at the store would grow
warm and chunky in its plastic jugs.

The mice would infiltrate the entirety of the house,
never again hiding between
the bread and crackers in the pantry.

Would the cockroaches still scatter at the hint of light?

A fine layer of dust would coat the countertops.

All those non-perishable items stockpiled --
for what?

The guns hidden under the floorboards,
or buried in the backyard by the garage would
rust with the flooding.

The neighbor's wads of cash wrapped in rubber bands in their safe,
the gold locked in the antique cabinet
wouldn't matter anymore. Invaluable, yet priceless.

No longer polluted by the lights of cities,
the stars would materialize with light brush strokes.

Like Van Gogh's "Starry Night," precious artifacts out of arm's reach.

A murmuration of swallows would swirl in the sky,
the North Star peeking through their wings,
winking at the wild oak trees.

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