

TIM SEIBLES

It Had Been a Long Time

since the poem had seen a sunset: trees, tall buildings

black against the burnt-orange sky. The breeze soft
like a sigh for a friend long dead.

Nothing to do now but try to stay clean.
And think. The poem never

tells anyone it had been “incarcerated”
which sounds like a way to cook meat.

Afraid, always kind of. Impossible not to remember
certain faces—the hard quiet of men.

Even out here
this light:

the feeling of being trapped—
as if a country could itself be a cage.

Something invisible: an idea, a germ, something
had worked on everybody.

Night now. The poem
looks back at the city

sees the moon not up, two headlights
shivving the dark.