

Wilderness House Literary Review 8/2

Jolene Brink

Skiing at the St. Paul Country Club

Crows in cheap dashes fill the sky,
flinging themselves out of skeleton trees.

They are going into the dusk, disappearing towards the
skyline heavy with snow.

The city is the sound
of commuters driving home and branches balancing
a February storm.

I want to believe it's a privilege

to know birds like this –

looking upside

the gray paper skies, moving between hidden sand traps and frozen greens.

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Falter

Later, I'll admit hearing black flies bump against the porch light, as Death peered through my kitchen window. And then, how the beans—burping over the sides of a saucepan—sizzled on the stove as I slid towards the floor. I'll leave out seeing my grandmother step through the doorway and the sound of buzzing across my eyes. If you ask, how did it feel? I won't mention the moon moving past the window, or the height between my body and the clock on the wall, betrayed by my knees and the children who hadn't called in years.

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After the Mayan Apocalypse

—For Newtown, Connecticut

Dear End of the World:

When you didn't come,
I went searching for you

surprised to find with your passing everything looked much the same,

except the sky tipped slightly wider,
like the edge of the Atlantic after a hurricane.

We're only symbols driving to the mall for a new pair of shoes after all,

even if the sky holds the only answer with its opening, sometimes

I let poems burrow into the earth,

so I don't have to look the other way.

Sometimes, I think not everyone was born to write about their grandmother's hands.