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# Winter Flies

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## WINTER FLIES

One of the local butcher's  
Largest carrion eaters  
Visible in the dying daylight  
On the high ornate ceiling  
Of a rundown townhouse  
Once occupied by the very rich:

A large room full of papers  
Carefully stacked in piles  
Around the desk in disarray,  
The hunched shoulders and the unkept  
Gray hair of the one writing  
With many sighs and long pauses:

The reconstruction of some bygone  
Massacre of the innocents  
With all the terrors  
Of that evil hour and day;  
The large number of executed,  
The few names the documents  
Have preserved, their foreign sound . . .

The many-legged motionless fly  
Watched by the siamese cats  
And the ancient housekeeper,  
the bony one in frayed slippers  
Bringing in the pale herb tea  
Against the growing chill and cough . . .

O blue-winged, shivering one!  
Some days it's like using  
A badly chipped white cane  
And seeing mostly shadows  
As one gropes for words that come next.