1981

Extended Outlook

Madeline DeFrees

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November days, and the vague shape of a wing, of a claw at the sill, at the drawn shade of the bedroom, signals the oncoming freeze. Setting the scent-baited trap for the shadow mouse back of the dark pine cabinet, the tenant hears the cat downstairs whining to be let in.

The tree is a violin bow scraping the sound box of the house all day. Close to the ribbed breath, the scrolled end of wind under the eaves turns back on the fine-tuned neck, answers the shrill jay in the caterwaul of blue and falling light.

Trying to score this weather for strings, no hurricane, but a planned diminuendo, I pretend that the house is my own; the cat, my pet. That Canada wishes me well. That the blue shriek and the wail are a cradlesong and the gulf repeating this gale in my ear, is an old friend or no friend of mine.