

when the house rumbles, the child hides in the basement under-sink
their mind wanders among musty pipes;
do the windows rattle because of the shouting
or because of the train leaving the station
can you take me with you?

when They argue, They throw
dish washing gloves, video cassettes,
a country, old curses, chairs.
They threaten to throw the child out the house
screaming, huddling, shoving towards the door,
“If you don’t stop, we will leave you on the streets!”
to stop hyperventilating, hold your breath
ears clog with air, muffling sound like an elevator drop
“—we will you leave you on the streets—”
a fade into silence. stillness. They are satisfied. They shuffle away.
They teach love and a star dims.

I found a cat in a paper bag in the middle of winter,
like the corpse in the basement under-sink.
I rest the body near potted plants and a tree-shaded window
afternoon light twinkling, mimicking a child’s laughter;
the corpse remembers life carefully, quietly, gently...

years later, my eyes slowly open
in the distance, a train whistles, ready to take us anywhere

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