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Storm Brewing

She stood at the window, watching
clouds stride across the sky
toward the house,
gather,
a big, black fist
above the brown roof.

She wanted it
to pound the glass,
pry up the screens,
get inside,
smash the wedding picture
that held her
white, frozen in a frame —

yes, fistfuls of wind and rain
to roll up the stairs,
gust down the corridor
into the bedroom,
tear back the blankets,
shred the sheets,
capsize the double bed,

rip into the closet
where, clutched in black wire claws,
her blouses flapped their arms,
her pants kicked their legs,

wake the suitcase
from its trance
against the wall,

set it free.

Jill Solnicki
Toronto, Ontario

The Meeting

your eyes glitter over the table,
the floor shifts slightly, now your hands are open
palm upward, laying it out, the lay of the land,
the way it lies. why do I say nothing?
silence is not falsehood, but a truth
of sorts, the truth of itself, of silence.

listen: I do not trust you, do not trust
myself. this is the truth of lies,
which are silver at first, and easy,
polished as spoons. later there are black slugs
on the lettuce, or is it just the light?
better eat carefully anything I give you.

to walk in the room, over the slanting floor
on rotten boards, we who put those here
forgot to note the location of the holes.
the table tilts over the shifting floor,
the words have shadows in them, shadows
swallow them up, the room settles itself

in its new position: are those cracks or webs?
now there is only your voice and the altered structure
of the room, and the way a gesture, a shoulder touched
could be appeal or curse, promise or threat.
glasnost, put it into whatever language
you happen to be speaking at the time.

cards on the table, all jokers, they wink
suggestively at each other, you take a trick.
this lie, this other death, will soon be over.

Janet McCann
College Station, Texas