

LESLEY WHEELER

Another Evening on the Porch Avoiding Biotoxins

My friend's marriage rots at the stem end,
a peach left too long in the bowl,
yet the flesh of the sky drips sweetness.

Welts itch on my arms, in the damp socket
behind my knee. In the house behind my back,
the ducts are speckled with black mold.
But it's beautiful, the sky-rag dangling
beyond lax power lines and lichened branches.
The sun's last word is an orange beam
flung past dirty clouds. Yesterday,

my son and I bumped a dehumidifier
up our knotty pine steps, one at a time.
He's growing strong and kindness sings
through his bones the way tree frogs chant
in our damaged maple. Tonight, when I lie
awake, alone, frog music will infiltrate the room
till I can barely breathe. At once near and
distant. A chime both steady and shivering.

It begins now, disregulating me,
gorgeously thwarting understanding.
If there's pattern in the clamor, it cleaves
to some inhuman measure, zoosporic.

Notes

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