

The World in the Evening

By Rachel Sherwood

As this suburban summer wanders toward dark
cats watch from their driveways — they are bored
and await miracles. The houses show, through windows
flashes of knife and fork, the blue light
of televisions, inconsequential fights
between wife and husband in the guest bathroom

voices sound like echoes in these streets
the chattering of awful boys as they plot
behind the juniper and ivy, miniature guerillas
that mimic the ancient news of the world
and shout threats, piped high across mock fences
to girls riding by in the last pieces of light

the color of the sky makes brilliant reflection
in the water and oil along the curb
deepened aqua and the sharp pure rose of the clouds
there is no sun or moon, few stars wheel
above the domestic scene — this half-lit world
still, quiet calming the dogs worried by distant alarms

there — a woman in a window washes a glass
a man across the street laughs through an open door
utterly alien, alone. There is a time, seconds between
the last light and the dark stretch ahead, when color
is lost — the girl on her swing becomes a swift
apparition, black and white flowing suddenly into night.

Rachel Sherwood, "The World in the Evening" from *Mysteries of Afternoon and Evening*.

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