

Kristina Wright

Light Work

I'd see you from the window
as I drew my shades:
an old woman with empty cans
stacked in a bin by the door.

I remember your porch
full of cats, the white knot
of your hair stuck with pins
and wish now I'd offered
to carry your bin to the curb
or fill your bird feeder with seed.

You kept your house always lit
as if you could keep the day
endlessly burning,
until your son found you
surrounded by cats
with a can in your hand.
He sold the estate:
an old house with an oak
he thought ruined the view.

Last winter when snow fell
and long blue shadows
bloomed beside the road,
a cardinal died in your yard.
I watched your body bend
toward the earth,
in your hand, a sharp spade,
making light work
of the grave.