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Thoughts on Coming Home

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Thoughts on Coming Home

REBECCA HOUSE SHANNON

I realize not that the difference between staying or leaving
Is the person I would have become.

It is strange how the smell of something familiar can make you feel lonely.
Like summer. The greenness of it all, crickets like messengers,
or charcoal burning.

What I hate is the dull ache I get from looking at mountains;
long and slow like the sun falling, not quite bright enough to
make you cry, but just enough to sting.

I miss a few people with names big like houses, *Augusta* or *Pendergraph*.
I want so badly to live in them. Look out through crooked windows,
roll these elaborate rugs down the hallways, and varnish the staircases.
I want to crawl around on the attic floor, dank with its walls sloping in like
wings. What if I were to lift off? Soar away?

I have forgotten so much while I was away. The dead moths in the corner,
the slender candlesticks in a row before my mirror. The smell of my father.
His old shirts draped over a chair or hung on a door knob, like prayers, worn and
forgotten, sung from mouths that never really learned quite how to forget.