

1981

## Extended Outlook

Madeline DeFrees

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## Extended Outlook · *Madeline DeFrees*

November days, and the vague shape of a wing,  
of a claw at the sill, at the drawn  
shade of the bedroom,  
signals the oncoming freeze. Setting  
the scent-baited trap for the shadow mouse  
back of the dark pine cabinet,  
the tenant hears the cat downstairs  
whining to be let in.

The tree is a violin bow  
scraping the sound box of the house  
all day. Close to the ribbed  
breath, the scrolled end of wind under the eaves  
turns back on the fine-tuned neck,  
answers the shrill  
jay in the caterwaul of blue  
and falling light.

Trying to score this weather  
for strings, no hurricane, but a planned  
diminuendo, I pretend that the house is my own;  
the cat, my pet. That Canada  
wishes me well. That the blue shriek and the wail  
are a cradlesong and the gulf  
repeating this gale in my ear, is an old friend  
or no friend of mine.