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Dusk at Midday

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John Kinsella

Dusk at Midday

I write about dusk in the late morning
in the hours before storms.

I am not
relying on forecasts,
it is written on my skin.
The house ticks more rapidly
in its tension
of expansion and contraction
as weather “builds.”
The house questions its standing.

It’s a necessary
debate, and we are inside it, waiting, expectant.

This is the air becoming a sea,
a metamorphosis
but not to state the obvious.

Thickening
cloud out of nowhere, occluding sun.

The long brutal dry will end under brutal
conditions.

Suddenly the day will seem
as dusk and it won’t be prophetic. But
if it doesn’t rain—

lightning will set
the district alight.

This has been the pattern,
and, though dusk is my preferred time of day,
there’s nothing refreshing
or ambiguous

about it.

The tragedy is as clear as day
and fires are harder to fight at night
if the conditions

don't ease,

if the wind

doesn't drop.

The magpies are out of sorts,
uneasy in their roles as seabirds.