First Home

Susannah Felts
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I fell for the aluminum siding
*that stuff’ll never go bad*

and a garage where sculptures rise
from my jittering hands.

In the next yard reclines a mattress—
whose bodies it held, I’ll never know.

I’ll never know why the last man
who lived there screamed

with headphones on
and scrubbed the peeling east wall

like he could leave his mark
only by erasing others.

In summer bake, a stink
slithered into my garage.

The place next door
revealed its decay.

And the man’s girl pit
sunk teeth into my dog.

At night, did he and I both
lay awake to trains so near
they shook our windows?
He left. And the house came down

and the roaches came over.
For some months, my view a perfect sunset.

Now my hands have raised a fence,
held jackhammer to rocky hillside

of Maynor Place. I am embedded.
If a tall skinny now shadows my lawn

it will not forbid the birds,
nor keep my fruit from flushing red.