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1999

## Edge of House

Dzvinia Orlowsky

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## Feather

A feather, its bird, the color red.  
All three, like their silence, belong to this day.  
Inside this house, at the sink,  
a drop of water  
immense as sky, immense as itself.  
Long shadows stretch across the back yard,  
cut borders into afternoon-long provinces,  
meager grasses.  
Something passed here long before  
I stepped into light.  
A single feather, its lost script.  
Which world, trembling, did it finally choose?

## **Eight Glasses of Water a Day**

Where do they go  
if not out through the body and eventually,  
miraculously, back to earth.

Nothing drowns beneath skin,  
everything surfaces like snakes  
out pores,

the body's crawl spaces  
pungent with fear  
and love.

It's good, they tell me,  
this cleansing.  
Imagine a hose

always full, left on.  
Imagine a rhododendron  
in a forest,

explosion of color —  
after rain,  
after surrender.

A man could still love me,  
a face soft as a nun's,  
decades of poison

released.  
I want to live longer  
so that I can drink

more, excusing myself  
quietly from every room.  
Let me die

preoccupied —  
fires extinguished,  
a steady rowing backwards.

## Nests

Hinged on a black branch,  
empty when I find them,

they remind me of what killed you,  
of what couldn't be coughed away.

When do birds nest?  
When night claims everything,  
holds it with its claw?

What impulse spreads their wings  
across the hollow skulls of eggs?

Buoyant in entanglement,  
I call anything that warms me a nest.