

My grandparents' house was razed—left in piles of stone, board, and debris

CHRISTINE ROBBINS

Years ago,
Magnets in my hand.
In the beginning,
Paramecium bloomed.

Water in the well, the well
Of stone.
Small magnet spheres
Turning in my hand.

Lodestone. Protozoa roam—
The hunger
For tiny things. Hunger

As a weighted place
Where magnets snap.
A black snake

Moves in cellar stones.
If I could
Divide myself. Move
around in time.

If I pulled you
In the mythic sense. Moved you
In your mind.

A farm pig down the street
Was brought inside
When the barn burned down.

Do teeming protozoa
Dream. Creatures breed
In puddles in the street.
My face

Reflected many times.
I'm from
A large family.

A window in the outer wall—
A window to no room.
The light

Might move across the field, hover
On the glass. It cannot
Fall inside.

The well
Holds water in stone.
Not everything was razed
When the house went down.

A snake might have wings
In a mythic sense.

A sow in labor
Might bite a farmer.
The hand that feeds
Is likely human.

Wings and cilia,
Fruit in the trees—
Globes of yellow

For a god to palm and eat.
A house
In a mythic sense.

Is this
An origin story.

When my uncle died,
I unearthed a box
Of magnets in a dream.

I dreamed the box but couldn't see
The pull inside. I opened it,
He died.

Pigs in the bed
When the barn begins to burn.

When my uncle died—
An Irish wake.
Then the ocean took his friend.

Spit him back
In three days' time. Is this
An origin story.

A snake might live for years
In a cellar. Might move
Between the stones.

By the window to nothing,
Stones in a well.
And stones inside—

Fireplace, cellar—a place for a snake
Or the water dripping down.

I keep bending to drink
From a protozoan stream.
In a mythic sense,

A house always stands.

When the house was razed,
I imagine we each
Imagined the field.

Drink from a well—
Something small
Might bloom inside.

Violet hour, how often
It's a violet hour, bluing
Down the outer wall, turning

The window to nothing,
To nothing.

When the house was razed,
Stones in the field.
The water remains.

