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After the Freeze

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AFTER THE FREEZE

—for C.C.

Folding and unfolding her fingers
your mother's talking to an empty chair.
Her hands rest on the Bible in her lap.

Overcast, the sky is either
a blue woman in a uniform
or a woman in a blue uniform.

After the first hard freeze, sycamores
and maples go first. Out front
your little brother's raking leaves

happily because his favorite holiday
is Halloween. Wave when he smiles at you,
soon he'll drive away for good.

Decked in dress blues, now the sky
unbuttons just enough to let
the morning glisten like a trophy.

Your mother's talking to an empty chair.
Your little brother listens. Someone with
your eyes is walking to the door.