What You Let

Andrea Francis
What you let

Snow up to her hips. Though she wants to be cold, she prefers the sink of her boot before it can flatten.

Frozen lock & metal key.

He wipes a string of snot with his sleeve. His boot strikes the door. Fucking door. His boot strikes the door.

He undresses all of her –

He hangs her wool socks over a chair-back next to the potbelly stove. Her boots still by the door.

His chest this close to her breasts.

Fire sputters. The burning woodpile shifts. He splinters more for tonight.

She shivers. Shakes him. Tucks her legs into herself.

He feels his way to the stove. He adds more wood. Stokes.

Her hair-smell, in smoke, wakes her.

A woman can leave without looking through a window.

Grove of sequoia dipped in white.

On New Year's Eve, she runs, feels her footing, & slides. Her arms outstretched. Too drunk to worry about slipping.

Cold, if you let it.

She uses three fingers to write his name, cursive, in the snow bank. Smokes a joint in the clearing.

The bird hops to the other side of the trunk, out of sight.

It will come around again if she's quiet.

See?