

THE OTHER SHOE

Ann K. Schwader

It's not so much a sound as sudden quiet,
a kind of jungle hush induced by fear:
some local carnivore whose favored diet
might just include you has approached too near.
The clockwork of your life is wound & oiled,
gyrating like a gyroscope—& yet
each pot you watch seems likelier to boil.
Your muttered mantra, “What did I forget?”
draws nothing but the most unhelpful hints
from passers-by, until you realize
your mind keeps running these experiments
for lack of stimulation otherwise.
Like drama queens, synapses starved pursue
imagined droppings of the other shoe.

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