

AND DROPPED WHAT THEY HELD.

fences and rabbits, stitches and seams; tiles, greenery, the lake. The game was in waiting for others to play; it required stamina, and imagination. As did our brief but inventive interest in God, whose groundward advance we thought we heard in the rushed brushing of one birch leaf against another, in the flapping of a red roof-board down atop the walls of a birdhouse. Also, oranges and wallpaper; fault lines. It really was as if each new thought was a stepping into a different room. Mine, the bathroom, gone bright white with words like basin, brush-tray, chrysanthemum, lock. And that our sentences trapped us. He, with the flowers we took from the table to plant in circles around the yard, came alive in the cracks and the joints of the woodwork, swelling and warping in the rain. Rust through the doors, more, or gone; it was that same rain reddening to run mirror-flat against the glass while he bit his lips to bloom beneath the blankets. We knew what it meant to get June wrong: it was a different kind of leaving—a stalling of the curtains mapping filigree in squares onto the floor while we waited in chairs for someone to start talking. Or how, with green commas in our eyes, we trained our gazes on that low spot behind the yard where the last sun had been—