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On the Places We Have Lived, with Children Not Quite Born

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On the Places We Have Lived, with Children Not Quite Born

Lust through doors & vibrate screens like humming paper nests.

 Say you don't believe in ghosts
 of a before-life
 though the bedskirts rustle, & I
have smelled you burning
sage beneath the windows. This is an old house
with no refrigerator
 & we can hear them laughing in empty bedrooms.

Imagine life before kitchen cabinets:

 My father chewing
 jars of pig knuckles, brined & coaxed

sardines between his blunt teeth:

five sisters learning to honeycomb
 the anatomy of the absorbed twin
 sized beds where we slept—

I emerge from the mouths
of my sisters & become incarnations of all our mothers
: un-fossilization of a firstborn, crowning

of the wasp queen. A father marrows
in your baluster spine—waiting
 & your ulnas, they vellum—filmy
as the pregnancy of radiator air, of me:
Crystallize a hive in my abdomen
 & I'll fill the cavities of my sister's molars.

You were the wasps living in our walls,
a welcome stinging—
 a harvest of clover & carrion:
my ovaries staining the hardwood with a
 we've been waiting for you.