

In the Room of Lost Things

After the fire, things must have been tight for a while, all that
contracted living. I close the eyes and the eyes step from their caves,
for a moment flash lights across epileptic fits and turns and sell
visions before dawn. The sheds of vanities full now.
A pretty post office: small cards, high snow. We are here.

Because now even the cattle are mad they do not hear the bell.
Because now wolves lurk again in darkness.
Because now the sheared wool of all times collects itself
in heaps of failure. Cotton undershirts, worn three times, dirty
and repaired by parents and passed

to brothers and sisters to brothers and sisters.
Where I look, the view from ash, in tears extinct.
Those on a last breath hope, which kindles them
again, towards products of urgent necessity
and artificial illusion, speculation and acts.

For sale: white shirts, young hands, which do not embrace
tenderness. Sad. As sad as the words of the south.
Others did not come at all.
They did not travel to this age – old loves kept them.
Our loved dead ones.

Our mothers eternally without embrace. At all the transit points,
at the border of every country,
at the edge of isolation of this room.
The man shoves a handful of cans aside, opens the suitcase
to reveal a chainsaw. Not allowed under current regulations.

They, we say, consist of variously motivated enemies
who will have to learn to love us. Only then will we have won.

Claudia Grinnell