

Courtney Fuller
Sliding Glass Door

It was the longest summer day in June
when I left the sliding glass door open
and it slowly sucked the chilled air
from our suburban paradise.

Always upon his return, he checked the thermostat.
“Again?” he said.
One degree below his preferred temperature.

I glared at the open door and wondered
how much further I could push it open
with just my thoughts.

I sat frozen on our leather couch in my underwear
flanked by our two children, fidgeting uncomfortably.
“Again,” I replied carefully,
but it was hard to keep my tone in check.

He looked around the room and muttered,
“This place is a disaster.”

And in that moment I realized
that he was right:

The thermostat is set too low,
the dirty floors,
the laundry piles,
the cascade of mold in the shower,
Are you ever going to empty the dishes from the sink?

Oh, and why did we get a dog? We're never home.
The kids' rooms are a mess.
There's too much water in the bathtub.
That's too much to spend.
That's too far to go.
The door is unlocked.
The garage isn't cracked to let the heat out.
Of course you can have lunch with your rich friends while I work every day.
You're a slob; I don't want my kids growing up to be slobs.
I'm embarrassed to have anyone over.
You really think you should eat that?
You've had enough (*as he pushes my plate away*)
You should start running again, sweetheart, it's the best way to drop weight.
"Jesus, what did you do all day?"

Yes, Jesus, what did I do?

I rose from the couch and slid the door open wider.
And then like the chill in the room,
I just left.