

The House with the Piano | *Lynne Ellis*

Music books gathered in dandelion paths
on the carpet all that spring.
Bluebells and long purples bloomed
under the bedroom window or
on the hills across. We planted
ourselves indoors and watched the rain or
watched clouds move across the sun,
if we even noticed the sky. Paradise,
we said, in our fugitive way. This
is paradise. What did we ever do? Did we
read books? Pencil crossword puzzles?
Count our hours in robin songs,
flying out of the old upright,
slowly going out of key? Maybe our bodies
rose and fell and blossomed outward
and that's what filled the time.
Maybe we bartered for more seasons
with coins found in between
the pillows and the headboard or
the carpet and the baseboard,
if we even noticed the decor.
Maybe the days themselves simply wandered
around the house, heel-padding
from bedroom to kitchen to window
to piano—warm with new songs—and back to bed.
We breathed in clean laundry—borax,
spiced with cardamom and turmeric.
Outside, bluebells gave way to tulips
gave way to herbs greening with new bits to chew.
And when I ate oregano out of your hand
your palm was wide and flat and taut
and the dust green flecks stuck together.