Phone Ringing in a Dark House

Rolly Kent
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The poet shares his work in any number of ways once it's conceived, primarily from page to reader. But Rolly Kent shows us that his poems have always existed in our hearts and minds and that it is only necessary to discover them, hidden there, seemingly as memories. Back from a twenty-year hiatus, Kent is the author of two previous collections: The Wreck in Post Office Canyon and Spirit, Hurry.

Moonlight Sonata

Once they just stared from across the street.
Now nothing stops them, not even the new medication. Which war is this? My sister has lost track, but the soldiers keep coming, slipping through the walls. Some lounge on sofas, some open closets and drawers, inhaling her favorite lovely things. A few stand by the bed and watch her sleep, all of them deserters, none of them willing to leave her. Each night they promise they'll return to the front as soon as the recital is over: They listen with my sister to the beautiful woman in white as she plays Beethoven in the front yard—a vision of elegance, my sister says, so much like our mother. But nobody respects the past anymore. The statuette of Venus lies in pieces in the hall where the men gather to climb the stairs. Whatever a mother's love was good for is gone. Everything quakes in moonlight.

One child is spared. One is not.

MATT SUTHERLAND (November / December 2023)

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