

HOWARD WRIGHT

SIN

With a storm brewing, she pulls up the sofa—no castors,
no carpet-cups—to the fire, a fire to be fed and cared for
with the ministrations of an acolyte. Split logs are piled
in a wicker basket at the open hearth between the brass dogs.
She imagines all the big trees down on the dark roads,
the narrow back roads, sideswiping powerlines like cobwebs.
Turning a corner, there is a detour to another part of the parish,
the golden threads of town and river stitching the seam
between earthly heaven and unheavenly earth, the motley
of the undeceased. She sits back happy with the blaze,
lilies exploding above lead crystal, pollen toxic and staining,
phone gaping like a portal, laptop singing from long ago.
She leans over to select wood as carefully as choosing a book,
turning it, feeling its warm, blocky, goodly weight in one hand,
then the other, before placing it neatly in the soundless heat.
Lost in the thought of the flames, she didn't know sin
was so important to those who had never experienced it.
She is ready to enjoy the storm and the world it makes.