

Rosita Georgieva

On Mother's Day

I remember that noon - I was turning 12
and I believe that 12 is a magical number –
we gathered in the dining room without any noise,
the table was silently set - the silk and silver, scented candles, grapes,
the heavy decoration over the mahogany
was ready for years for my mother's return,
the crystal was taken out but no one dared to touch a glass,
my little brother forgot about his bottle of milk,
there was thirst in the dried, scented air
but no one asked for water, no one complained,
my older sister was not in a mood to tease, the twins were simply
a mirror reflection, without his chronic cough
my father was a wax weird figure leaning over the table
when the clock struck and everyone's heart counted
the miraculous 12, and I saw the two "imaginary" cats
under the big mahogany chair arching their backs
and running down the stairs one second before the door-bell rang,
and the stairs creaked and her figure - exacting and fast
shook the house, shot the everyday irreality,
and her voice came from my throat
so dry that I pictured her as a thirsty explorer
coming from a desert,
I couldn't see the face - only her rusty-orange hair
flaming the stairs, flaming the air, flaming years of waiting.
In the fire of my mother's return
no one cried out for water.