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Shelter's Vigil

Julie Kim Shavin

For a breath of air,
I opened the back door
and saw that a giant swan had descended to our grounds,
initiating, possibly, a last winter together.

I got up later,
to see it still there,
a dumb and beauteous thing
my wishing for a gray day
so thick and congealed,
nothing could slice it
except, perhaps, another swan
come to shelter the first with mighty wings,
shutting all down for the day.

I resumed my dark vigil,
pondering dubious futures
and great swans
still and barely shimmering
beneath the brave and believing trees.