

Door

When friends walk away too soon, you're left in the draft from the November night blowing past where they forgot to stand in the doorway, in their coats and woolly hats, saying one last thing and one last thing more, while you shivered and laughed, maybe wished they would go, because even in their shelter the wind blows cold where you stand to see them off, lean against the jamb in shirt and sock feet, rub elbows, clutch arms, but, even as they turn away at last, you yourself add just one more word, one more twist to the tale you can none of you seem to let end – *Wait* – press a bag into their hands – *for the long drive home, for lunch tomorrow* – till finally they say they really *must* – and you wait while the car backs down the lane, rounds the corner, before you flick off the lights, lock the door, climb the stairs. There'll be a mess in the morning, proof you all let go, partying so well, talking so loudly, it was hard to wind down till you stood at the door shivering and buzzing with spirits and words.

When a friend leaves too soon, the draft blows in.