

Lodging

There could be a latch somewhere
that comes undone and then lets out
the moths and mice and cottonwood
lives I've been thinking about
during bus rides to the office.
I remember a library book my sister
and I checked out repeatedly
one very cold winter. Pictures
of dollhouse furniture made from
spools, matchboxes, Sweets tins
and other odds and ends from
around the house. We went
room to room in search of multi-
colored twist ties, thumbtacks
and babyfood jars filled with buttons.
But nothing we constructed
had quite the same charm
as the well-appointed shoeboxes
of the frog and chipmunk figurines
we read about. We were hard
on ourselves; being children
we assumed the job of world-making
as seriously as tying a shoelace
or learning to dive at the pool.
We could see our town
at scale: painted cardboard houses
fitted with cellophane windows, perfect
for looking out on tissue-paper shrubs
along the curb. I still can't decide
which place I want to live in more. I think
I grew in two directions: one with a mortgage
and too much IKEA, and another furnished
in fine bottlecap end tables, postage-stamp
paintings hung on the wall, and a family of
rabbits neighboring next door.