

A.D. LAUREN-ABUNASSAR

Aphantasia

storm clouds farm the distant field —
is it too late to write about Ophelia?
If I have the look of a desperately drowned
girl? Everywhere people say good morning
before the morning has happened. Everywhere
lightbulbs are burning out before they should.
Today: the sky is not allowed. Rain can happen.
Hands cannot happen. I lift and unlift the lock.
I try to surprise the neighbors with activity. See:
here she is. Alive. Shocked by attention, I cut
the soles of my feet running to bed. My father:
in the distant field. I see him from the window
looking for the tent that blew away.
He has equally blown some great distance.
To him, there is no such thing as thunder. To me,
it's the thing that lives in the jittery birds. I,
a jittery bird. I count to eleven and feel overwhelmed.
My father is stooping low in the earth like a dream. He couldn't

tell you, now, what home looks like. How did he
get here? So far away. How does he know
this is right? I count to twelve and he disappears. He happens
only sometimes. So far from my wind-heaved stoop.
Consciousness is full of want. Sleep full of want that feels
possible. Maybe the reason my father sleeps through
parties, films, the occasional lapsing car ride. So he can stumble
upon the possible. Today I woke up feeling
like an already said thing. Feeling the cleric howling. My
father: still sleeping. The sky: doomed to happen. The storm
unveils intention & some water falls down. I know this only
by sound: my head most comfortably burrowed.
This sound should be a dream, I think. My father
should be at home in his newly hemmed nightshirt.
Sleep invites the promise that something can be better
left unkept. Love, I pray, is not allowed to sleep.

A.D. LAUREN-ABUNASSAR is an Arab-American writer. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Narrative*, *Boulevard*, *Cincinnati Review*, *Radar*, *The Moth*, and elsewhere. She earned an undergraduate degree from Emory University and is a graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop.