Entropy

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My mother’s kitchen was asleep.
Our family didn’t gather there:
we lived and ate in our bedrooms
hypnotized by the blue lights of tv.
But, in her kitchen, pots and pans
floated, belly up, in the week-old
water, and our garbage, smiling,
outgrew its bag. All of this very
slowly, as if in a dream. My mother
despises what can never truly
be done so she does not care for cooking
or cleaning. If one cooks a fine dinner
one must wash the dishes to cook
a fine breakfast to wash the dishes
to cook a fine lunch and so on. My mother
explained this one afternoon in the basement
where the laundry grew around us like trees.

Our jungle-home was a metaphor for
my mother giving in to entropy.
When wine spilled on the couch and we
laughed as the stain unfurled,
we were embracing chaos. When we
fell asleep with the lights on
and the tv talking, we were
the weeds in our own garden.

My mother’s kitchen was haunted.
Her refrigerator leaned to one
side and made only brown ice.
Her biscuits were as flat as plates.
But none of this mattered because
we were forgetting ourselves
even as we were becoming ourselves.
We pursued truth, beauty,
the meaning of life while
my mother’s kitchen discovered
decay. All this unraveling—
moldy food, newspapers
piling up to the ceiling.
We loved each other like that:
bananas going black on the counter,
lines coming in around our eyes.