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27th and Lombard

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The Painting of Our Old Front Yard

All is as it was, the sunlight making it beautiful. There's the edge of the roof of the doghouse, where puppies were born that grew to doghood, had puppies of their own, and died. And that's the bush where a little snake once spent the summer, and my daughter let it bite her on the finger, such a gentle bite, a sort of "hello" of a bite.

I know that below the lower edge of the painting are flagstones, cold under bare feet on a summer morning, warm on a summer evening; that around that clump of trees is a home where a crazy family once lived, and farther on down the road another one where a crazy family still lives, and in fact, every one there was crazy, and so were we.

But the children, the puppies, the flagstones, the sun, the snake, were beautiful and good, and will always, always be good and beautiful; will always, always, be beautiful and good.

Stephanie Hughes

27th and Lombard

Staring at a bright red arrow Pointing left I wait for green to come

Scattered gray clouds Like torn tulle Waft gently upwards

Longings live in me, Unruly beasts Suffocating for a breath of air

Mrs. Dalloway was right: It is dangerous to live Even one day

Dangerously exciting Dull-sad-sweet To wait for this signal

Suzanne Smith