

Suddenly the House Went Dark

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And though we flipped all the switches, tested
breakers in the basement, phoned and
phoned, Nothing. When the big boys
turn off your power, it's gone. Our house dark
then, as the inside of a shut refrigerator.
Our red walls purpling until they seemed
to emit cries like a ringing telephone.

Now we stumble around the house
in the frigid black, feeling our way from room
to room, marveling that we recognize so little.
No keyboard works except the piano.
But music? —is over and done with.

I rummage for paper and pencil, thinking I will
scribble this poem the old way, trying to remember
how. Around me, rooms from my past
houses switch places with one another. I meet
my old self walking down the hall. Our yard
has blinked out, gone now from all our windows.
What if the whole city goes black? What if
dark extinguishes the sun? What if God pulls
some big plug for good? What will we believe in?
In what dark house will we live?