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*Building with Its Face Blown Off* 2005

How suddenly the private  
is revealed in a bombed-out city,  
how the blue and white striped wallpaper

of a second story bedroom is now  
exposed to the lightly falling snow  
as if the room had answered the explosion

wearing only its striped pajamas.

Some neighbors and soldiers  
poke around in the rubble below

and stare up at the hanging staircase,  
the portrait of a grandfather,  
a door dangling from a single hinge.

And the bathroom looks almost embarrassed  
by its uncovered ochre walls,  
the twisted mess of its plumbing,

the sink sinking to its knees,  
the ripped shower curtain,  
the torn goldfish trailing bubbles.

It's like a dollhouse view  
as if a child on its knees could reach in  
and pick up the bureau, straighten a picture.

Or it might be a room on a stage  
in a play with no characters,  
no dialogue or audience,

no beginning, middle and end —  
just the broken furniture in the street,  
a shoe among the cinder blocks,

a light snow still falling  
on a distant steeple, and people  
crossing a bridge that still stands.

And beyond that — crows in a tree,  
the statue of a leader on a horse,  
and clouds that look like smoke,

and even farther on, in another country  
on a blanket under a shade tree,  
a man pouring wine into two glasses

and a woman sliding out  
the wooden pegs of a wicker hamper  
filled with bread, cheese, and several kinds of olives.