

A House That Says Nothing

In memory of my father Bobdan Kurowski

I've slept in a bed that remembers bodies
yours in particular, when it was dying;
It remembers your medications and moans
your courage and fear—and it says nothing

I've been in a room that remembers people
your father who was sent to a Nazi Oflag
your brother-navy captain, who took his life
and me-the little girl; and it says no word

I've seen a mirror that remembers faces
that others have forgotten; your guests
who were hopeful or drunk, passionate,
generous or foolish—and it keeps silent

I've sat at a table that gathered many friends
Kazia-the staunch fighter for a wrong cause
Stasia-the malcontent, kind hearted, boring
And Maryla, whose tragic love never died

The table too has joined the house's silence
Only today I am venturing to hear it out.
I know, to understand nothing, I must yet
learn the silence of the chair and the lamp.