

Ants

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My husband has been vacuuming up ants all weekend with the new hose attachment. He likes how their back legs stretch for a moment toward the nozzle before the front legs lose their grip, like cartoon people holding onto tree trunks in a hurricane—at least that's how they appeared to me when he insisted I come and see.

"Okay," I said. "But that's enough now."

He looked disappointed, and a few hours later I heard the whirring start up again.

When I reproached him, he reasoned that the new arrivals had to join their brothers.

I couldn't argue with that.

Ever since we lost the baby

I've felt like an ant myself

blindly following the pheromone trail,
or the shadow of the ant in front of me,
until I stumble upon another day.

Though I cannot alter this insect chain,
I can't help wanting to hold fast to my tree.

For while my brothers may survive
the maelstrom which pulls them

to the other side, I know

the roar approaching fast behind me
is really the sound of the void rushing in.