

The New Criterion

Poems

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The trouble

by [Morri Creech](#)

for Steven Brown

It seems these days you've had enough of order.
For months you harried the blackbirds from the yard
with a pellet gun, clatter of pie tins, an absurd
straw-stuffed overcoat, and gave no quarter,
chucking lit fireworks, once, to chase them off
the laundry poles and apple trees. And now?
The pump gun leans against the table saw
in your garage, the clean shirts billow and luff
in mild suburban peace, although the change
has quite unsettled you. It's true the lawn
looks clear, the trees untroubled. But at dawn
sometimes you hear the creaking of a hinge,
a swing set or a screen door, and you wake
thinking they might be there. Of course, they're not.
They linger at the margins of your thought
like a dream you had once but can't seem to shake,
and now you wake so often, that each time
wind sifts the limbs or flaps the empty sleeves
you want to tear t ...

Morri Creech

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