LOUISE GLÜCK

AMAZONS

End of summer: the spruces put out a few green shoots.
Everything else is gold—that's how you know the end of the growing season.
A kind of symmetry between what's dying, what's just coming to bloom.
It's always been a sensitive time in this family.
We're dying out, too, the whole tribe.
My sister and I, we're the end of something.
Now the windows darken.
And the rain comes, steady and heavy.
In the dining room, the children draw.
That's what we did: when we couldn't see,
we made pictures.
I can see the end: it's the name that's going.
When we're done with it, it's finished, it's a dead language.
That's how language dies, because it doesn't need to be spoken.
My sister and I, we're like amazons,
a tribe without a future.
I watch the children draw: my son, her daughter.
We used soft chalk, the disappearing medium.