

Laura Mills

"THE NEWS"

I watched the news last night

the blue light from our tiny TV
making pockets of shadows dance
across the walls

The anchorwoman, skin pulled tight
over wide cheekbone, hair plastered
into submissive curls
tells us a story, with the words
"Deadly Tornado" quivering over her
shoulder, in front of a fake New York skyline.
The image changes and plays the same shot
of a crumpled venetian blind fluttering
in the wind, clinging for dear life to the remains
of a house, but it's unrecognizable as a house,
just a pile of bricks and wood.

The next story is about the real estate market
and they interview a couple
with two dogs, and nice home with a garden
and a big front porch.

After that comes stock footage
of a for sale sign and a realtor
shaking hands with two more
smiling people, who probably have
two dogs also.

The rest of the stories blur together
something about a robbery, or another

person shot by the police, or an apartment fire.
I take in the information, but it won't process
all this talk about someone else,
and I wonder why some people
have such a bad time of it, and here I am
with a new dog, and a great family, and friends
and a small TV to watch peoples' lives get ruined.

At the end it's time for the weather
and a tall man in a grey suit talks about
the low amount of tornadoes we've had this year
and then shows us a picture of the week with
little icons to represent sunshine and rain.
He makes a joke about his wife making him wash his car
this weekend because of the good weather
and he and the anchorwoman laugh a little too long,
their smiles too big for television.

I get tired of listening to them.
I click the remote, the screen goes black,
and for once my world is silent.