

MINNIE BRUCE PRATT

Someone Is Up

The snow's like boulders on this block, before dawn,
one heavy-coated person walking in the road, a man
coughing, two children waiting for the school bus,
two houses with insulation strips and no siding,
two with blue tarps and no roof, two *For Rent* signs
on this street of workers living behind what's left,
opulent façade of another century, the stained glass
shining now lavender, yellow, blue, someone is up
in the subdivided houses, the black metal envelopes,
mailboxes counting two four eight apartments,
four of the houses boarded up, three empty, and
on the last, plywood seals off the bottom windows.
But on the second floor, lights come on, someone is
up in the half-condemned house. The snow counts up.
The talk-show pundits say, *Things are better!* But here
we see the bust after every boom that means our jobs
and lives exploding, the dust settling like snow
on our shoulders, like cement around our feet.