

Clouds of Grief

Harper Holmberg

If you asked me where joy lives, I would tell you to
look near the clouds
where memories gather like storms,
swollen and heavy.

If you asked me about grief,
I'd simply open my hands and say:
Go anywhere.
It owns all the land here.

July sharpens everything.
The air grows thick and exacting,
And the clouds themselves seem to hesitate,
As if it knows the season is about to turn.

I have always been afraid of this month,
Not for what it brings,
But for what it takes away:
The illusion that nothing ends.

And yet, beneath this unmaking,
There is a strange, aching mercy.
The dying lavender does not cry out;
It crumbles in silence.

Perhaps this is what joy truly is,
The quiet knowledge that even endings are part of
the clouds,
And the clouds, despite everything,
Keep moving.