

## *Attic Fire*

by Kevin Casey

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Two full years after the purchase and sale,  
with flashlight and ladder you finally  
push aside the ceiling's trap door to make  
the pilgrimage to the attic of your house.

Planks and beams oxidized to ochre,  
umber, and browns as rich as caramel,  
at the west gable end by the chimney  
you find some newer boards nailed like a lid

across the charred lip of a hole that fire  
had burned through the roof, like an eye closed  
upon a close call all those years ago,  
when the house almost went up in flames.

How many days of sunlight bathed that space  
until the repair, until the commotion  
stirred in the home by this small disaster  
was eased with soothing words and fresh timber?

And how many nights after the fire broke out,  
when smoke and cinder rose from the hole  
like vision, before its inhabitants  
were finally able to look away  
from that terrible glimpse of heaven?