

The Fog People

by Colin W. Sargent

One year the fog stayed all summer
as if it were a lodger
picking his teeth after dinner,
refusing to retire
to his room upstairs.

Three weeks into June our tenants
started to complain.
When will it end? Mrs. Beaulieu asked,
scrunching up her face
to my father's wavery
Comment allez vous?

Mowing the lawn,
I couldn't see the beach
nor even the street,
perfume of sea roses
wafting across
the Kennebunk River,
just a bright suggestive mass
where St. Ann's Church
should have been,
and the fog was the world,
world without end.

All through July
the blue dungeon held us fast,
at times icy and clammy,
our senses separating
nice from niece,
Hawaiian Tropic unsticking itself eerily
from the bodies of girls.

"Are you sure this is summer?"
Mrs. Beaulieu asked.

"Is that you, Mrs. Beaulieu?"
my father replied, in French.

“Is your son mowing the lawn?”

“Was it inconsiderate of him
to have cut off
your daughter’s (tanning) foot?”

Her whole body was cammy tan.
You’d think of speaking to her,
but what could you say?

When the Beaulieus returned
to Montreal,
their license plate vanished
before their car turned out of the driveway.