

JONAS MODIG

MICE DART OVER THE DRAFTY FLOOR

Translated from the Swedish by Christian Gullette

Mice dart over the drafty floor
investigating cracks in the sapwood,
waiting in the darkness to sample
the edge of a yellowed newspaper
and gnaw away last summer's
celebrity gossip. No one comes and disturbs
the short winter days that disappear
in a hollow of falling snow.
Frost creeps into this vacancy,
labors breathing and barricades the door,
the slow chill's long lockdown
under a choleric sun.