

Lex Runciman

First Week in December, Taking a Walk

Last daylight hour,

and the feet that stride seek rhythm and pulse,
and the head that nods says *I see you*, says *hello*.

So dark comes down, colored lights, well-lit rooms:

cats on sofa backs, TVs, a menorah on a sill,
on one eggshell wall a bright Bahamian flag.

Children draw, assemble Legos, watch screens.
A knife chops celery and carrots. A large pot steams.

A body home from war yet knows the war.

Empty storefronts now,
cardboard and blankets just inside the roof drip line

where a stocking-capped woman has tucked herself asleep,
early, but she is tired, and I wonder again

how we let anyone come to this and we look away.

Lex Runciman's *Unlooked For* is forthcoming this year from Salmon Poetry. An Oregon Book Award winner, he lives in Portland, Oregon.