

## Suddenly the House Went Dark

by [Jeanne Murray Walker](#) in the [November 2024](#) issue

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And though we flipped all the switches, tested  
breakers in the basement, phoned and  
phoned, Nothing. When the big boys  
turn off your power, it's gone. Our house dark  
then, as the inside of a shut refrigerator.  
Our red walls purpling until they seemed  
to emit cries like a ringing telephone.

Now we stumble around the house  
in the frigid black, feeling our way from room  
to room, marveling that we recognize so little.  
No keyboard works except the piano.  
But music? —is over and done with.

I rummage for paper and pencil, thinking I will  
scribble this poem the old way, trying to remember  
how. Around me, rooms from my past  
houses switch places with one another. I meet  
my old self walking down the hall. Our yard  
has blinked out, gone now from all our windows.  
What if the whole city goes black? What if  
dark extinguishes the sun? What if God pulls  
some big plug for good? What will we believe in?  
In what dark house will we live?