

Poetry Porch: Poetry

The Balkan Wars

By George Kalogeris

In that story my aunts once told me on my birthday,
You need to know that it was December, and there
Were seven children, and all of them were girls.
But now the oldest daughter was expecting.
The story goes that he was shoveling snow
When a window opened: “A boy! She had a boy!”
The story unfolds no further than my grandfather
Looking up two stories and nodding his head,
Before he goes back to shoveling the walk.
Back to the ache in his back. Then back to his store

On the waterfront in New Bedford. *Oh swirling flakes,*
And chancy fates, and out of the blue an upstairs
Window that opens with joyous news! My Papou
Died when I was eight. All I remember
Of him is that he was tall, and liked to read
Five papers a day. And sold imported Greek olives
And feta cheese. Although I already knew
He'd been a soldier it wasn't until much later
I heard about the blizzard, and how he almost
Froze to death on a cliff in Albania.