

The Last Exile

When he left his house he didn't turn off the TV,
not because he expected to come right back
but as a promise to himself that he would return.
Images of crowds hearing speeches lit up
the round screen for weeks, until the authorities
removed the furniture and padlocked the doors.
By then he was hundreds of miles away.

The years went by. He learned a new language.
Color televisions replaced black-and-white sets.
His children grew up, moved to places he never visited.
Forty years after leaving his country, he passed away,
survived by his wife, four children, seven grandchildren,
and a Zenith TV in a garbage heap somewhere in Havana.