

## Wilderness House Literary Review 10/1

*James Grabill*

### **Slowly Leaving Orbit**

Hunger can make you unknowing and weak, unable to speak your father's language.

Forest floors still traverse lightning-first into the collective past. Racing on with evolutionary ancestry, the equator insinuates itself with a little of what we're forgetting.

Doesn't survival shape bones for the torso with wild rain and the spectrum? The poles hold onto distant wheeling suns and planets. The moon's unfinished arc sharpens over time into the blade on a North African sickle before vanishing. Now when it's dark, it's blank, and prophesying ends.

The moon circles over this place it was followed many years for what it told us. It shows up mostly unnoticed, slowly severing connections with Earth.

Many around here deny they know nearly a billion people on Earth are suffering in utter poverty, lacking even food supplies.

Seismic heat radiates from the slightest cracks in molecular drive. Heart-pulse blood's swimming new breath to every cell alive.

Hasn't fresh bread and its absence advanced unfinished history? Haven't lower and upper zero flooded mathematical propensity, where running cities on sunlight could happen as a breakthrough in integrity?

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### Yard Control

A blood-crimson and brown rooster shrieks and pecks at hens when the hour to do this is now. He scrutinizes the positions of nests and state of the yard before deciding to yodel, calling out their location there in the canyon of so much unknown.

This time, he succeeds in throwing himself into it, crowing up further alarm over the tradition, demanding the protectorate remain alert, that all chickens watch for daytime terrorists or unguarded panthery assaults from the perimeter.

He points the head on his neck at the sky out of view, aiming so high up he's out there with satellites, crying out there's no excuse not hearing. He stretches and flexes his wings and bulk in the assumption he's more than you'd expect, maybe two or three at once, or unnaturally gargantuan.

Finished with this, he looks down at his feet. Maybe he's tired, but he seems sad, walking behind the hen house like someone's uncle whose dog hasn't returned.

Now he's tending to the lay of feathers, reassuring his muscles and bones, taking a break from his burdens when he can, since the job of upper management can be relentless, though you'd never trade it for anything else.