

Wilderness House Literary Review 10/4

Carol Ellis

Love Seat for Sale - \$75 OBO

The beige boat parked outside says I'm supposed to leave by water, says the seas wait for me to travel into them by drowning, by fingering the waves, those fish jumping into the air, wait, those are rivers and the thick orange of salmon leap further than a hook and line can catch or not further and caught to sit on the far side of this couch, this shortened version of a relationship implied by the love tacked in front of it, but wait, what do the fish say aside from talking endlessly about water and the bears that come to snatch them out and yum another tasty critter eaten out of view, but I'm sitting on the near side by the window and don't even own this piece of pie this furniture, only saw it for sale and imagine the happiness of the happy couple as they buy the hope that goes with it maybe love lasts forever through all those fish dinners the smell fills the house and a baked potato on the side.

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Yellow Birds

Yellow birds fill the yard with yellow
and that forsythia of course about to bloom yellow
and those yellow roses that were a bad mistake,
not here or now, but years ago she held them
at her wedding, everything already wrong,
but she, sure of her power, kept on with the vows,
until she learned to promise nothing to herself,
or to others and not to believe their promises.
She began to fear she would never be loved
that the walk to the front door would be back
and forth and the groceries always for her,
let the yellow stay outside, she looks for colors
that will blush on her table to fill an empty
vase with another color another color another.

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Wild Mustard

The wild mustard in California sun yellow mustard yellow spice filling a jar then spread across bread eaten believed to taste good smear left on napkins on a table not in California of course I am remembering the world as it was much to remember many attempts to forget then the almond orchards of white bloom beautiful among the letters of the alphabet Cuba also beginning with that half moon rising over the trees there caught in my name then all that comes with bloom butterflies birds yellow butter spread as a blanket over what needs now to be warm growing colder unless summer comes wildfires burn in the hills reach into windows I leave again always leaving this chance to see Castro in a blue jacket and baseball cap sits in a car reaching out to shake the hands of tourists from Venezuela what did it all mean except that his name begins with that half moon whose light is the curve of a harbor the boats at the dock the world tied up ready to sail away always leaving every four years running through wild mustard until I am no longer anywhere I recognize who sold my world short did not shake my hand quarreled no longer able to love this disappearance of yellow the failure of words to raise what flag.