

Wilderness House Literary Review 10/4

Steven Petersheim
After Thoreau

I see the paths of pilgrims twisting
by the shores of Walden Pond
and join the seekers in their supplications
as we hope for nature's whisper,
a blessing on our upturned palms,
and bow alone together, waiting,
wanting even one kiss of air.

Walking back to Concord,
I see a garden growing –
perhaps a row of beans
stretching through the soil
as I cast dust in passing
and wonder how many of us
have looked without seeing
life that precedes pilgrimage
and waits for a return.

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The Birth of a Fawn

Mother's warmth, pulsing pain –
a splash of light, a tree stump,
a bump on the ground, a breath
of weary air and swish of grass.

The birth has happened, now she is here,
and tottering, tottering, the baby deer
on little legs unsteady, barely dry,
turns to find mother, milk.

Her mother lifts her head to look
with careful eye at me as I watch,
and I, heart beating, stand still
while she turns to lick the babe
in the woods alive now
in nature's nest.

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Raindrop

I caught a raindrop
and opened up my palm,
lifting up to heaven's view
the drop I knew would vanish,
leaving only wet residue.

I caught a raindrop
and turned again my palm,
looking hard in hope to see
the drop that, properly speaking,
had dropped its body down on me.