

## Wilderness House Literary Review 11/2

*Michael Estabrook*

### **Dipsophobia**

*Fear of Drinking Alcohol*

He's been unsure what to say  
to help his friend with his drinking problem  
then his daughter comes in swaying and slurring  
trying to pick a fight. Maybe he should deal  
with this one first, leave his friend the hell alone.

He was determined  
to drink himself to death  
and after a year of daily Vodka swilling  
became so sick he almost did die.  
That was enough to cure his drinking for good.

My 53-year old cousin is hospitalized  
for alcohol poisoning  
and all I can think is how could he  
be throwing his life away like this  
when there is so much more he could be doing.

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### Atelophobia

*Fear of Not Being Good Enough*

Now that he's older he knows he can no longer  
live-up to the standards of perfection  
he's set for himself but he also knows he's powerless  
to avoid knocking himself silly trying  
every single time.

I'm giving up trying to be superman watching my every  
action, thought and feeling like a hawk trying  
to be a perfect husband, and all things to everyone  
selflessly pretending to have grace under fire.  
I am what I am and it is what it is. Period

Impossible to be perfect or even mediocre  
at everything, need to improve your strengths  
ignore weaknesses don't kid yourself there are  
no more Renaissance Men the world  
is too complicated and there's not enough time.

Do you ever reach the point where  
you accept yourself as you are  
not feeling the urge to change or improve yourself  
when you simply look in the mirror, shrug  
and say it is what it is?

He always felt unworthy even  
to be touching her hand. But he worked hard  
and married her, cared for her, protected her  
making himself worthy at least  
for these last 50 years.

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### Caligynophobia

*Fear of Beautiful Women*

At Planet Gymnastics with my grandson  
watching the teenage girls twist and tumble thankful  
there was no girls team when I did gymnastics  
back in the sixties. We would not have survived  
such a distraction as sweet as it might have been.

Celia was our football queen in high school.  
I don't think I said one word to her back then.  
She was one of those untouchable beauties  
scared guys like us half to death. I had hard enough  
time talking to my own girlfriend for crying out loud.

Whenever I get impatient with her  
I remind myself that she's  
the most beautiful woman I've ever seen  
the best thing ever to happen to me and if  
she ever left my life would be over.