

Wilderness House Literary Review 12/1

Max Heinegg
Neighbor

Waiting in the aerie of his porch
by daylight, above the stone stairs, the old raptor
pulsing on his Pepsis, two doors down,
Mr. Mulyca of Glenwood Blvd.

His German Shepherd went by Schatzey
or Bozo, depending on his mood.
He would bolt from his chair to scare
children whose footballs scathed his lawn,
spit careening. We knew not to rattle him
if he had the Yankees on, & no damn cursing.

When he got "a little older" he couldn't drive
or the VA hospital would take his disability,
though he tells me he can still drive,
that he sleeps more with the Valium.

Frances reminds me a German tank shell stole
his short term memory. She keeps inside
as his barking echoes down the street
& will wait on him until one of them dies.

He sits in blue overalls, his smoke a mist
from which he calls Frances, Frances,
as she prepares his roast beef sandwich.

He tells me I am tall, look good,
that I should not smoke or go to war,
& hollers for her to find his Winstons
asking me, again, if I smoke.