

## Wilderness House Literary Review 12/1

*Russell Rowland*  
**Backyard Ornithology**

It's March on the eastern seaboard.  
On schedule, last year's discoveries  
rejoin us: Tufted Titmice circulate  
among our black branches, mingle  
with the omnipresent Chickadees.

If certain things will never change—  
seedtime and harvest—we can live  
with that, but as we welcome home  
these prodigals, you and I are not  
our last year's selves. We've learned

to distinguish between Call and Song,  
as between good and evil within us.  
Those arboreal antics are Behaviors,  
the back yard aviary, Territory.  
Male feeds Female (don't you wish).

They've appropriated the Garden  
that was our Territory for a while;  
don't know that life hatches death.  
(We exiles know.) In a tree that gave  
and took away, they build their nest.