

Wilderness House Literary Review 12/4

Nick Conrad

Wild Turkey in the Rain

Rain drenched, each step was studied,
as if skirting quick sand.

Stretching his neck into
a thin vertical line,

he swiveled his gaze, red wattle
swaying, to survey the well

ploughed field. His wings drooped.
I would like to say that some

ancestral sense of loss
pervaded in that instant

his stick and feathers frame.
But with a brain the size

of a few peas, I rather think
it was just that some genetic

wiring briefly shorted out
his innate timidity:

for an instant, he did not
seek cover; rather, as if

having forgotten his
devolved state, he raised a claw.

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Silence

Is not; is the absence of the whirring
hydra-headed siren mouthing an endless
mix of pitches, come-ons, flirtations, of coy intonations;
is not birds chirping; is not a parakeet singing
a song only it knows; is what possesses
distant trees, their branches writhing
in the wind like grasping fingers; is what
encloses the fish in the river as it peers up;
the praying mantis gazing back; the dragonfly
hovering nearby; is what rests within a stone;
is what enwraps the walnut's shell shrouded seed.