

Wilderness House Literary Review 13/2

Ray Greenblatt

KITCHEN MAN

Nick has seen them come and go—
drifters, drunks, psychos,
old men who can get nothing else.
He hasn't grown disgusted,
just turned up patience.
He's had his bouts with wives,
guys who take off with his loan,
booze that opens a gash
against the kitchen stove
but he struggles into a suit
before going to emergency.
After hours he head butts
for beers at the corner bar
and wins a reputation.
A kitchen is like a home
where the action is in
any hotel, school, company.
When the snow is grabbing
at the kitchen door
Nick will have a hot cup
of coffee waiting for you,
with a smile, a big lie.