

**Wilderness House Literary Review 15/1**

*Diane Webster*  
**SILENT DUST**

I can't imagine being blank  
when someone enters my room,  
and cogs of cognizance screech  
rust as teeth grind to mesh and move  
in synchronized rhythm.

I can almost hear a memory  
ticking into place  
as wheels tremble forward,  
but a cobweb lassoes recollection  
back into piles of silent dust.

WAKING MIRAGES

Much of his waking hours  
Dad stares at a desert  
horizon after horizon of dunes,  
tracks interred with sand  
as soon as foot steps  
so backtracking is futile.  
Heat waves shimmer  
over images blurred surreal  
and evaporated when focused on.  
Sunshine glints like a message  
flashed off a shard of mirror,  
but no one comes except wind  
kicking sand against his skin,  
siphoning, wilting, dehydrating  
a skeleton of mirages.

RINGS OF MEMORY

Termites gorge on Dad's brain, eating  
through concentric rings of memory –  
this morning's breakfast,  
Mom's stroke and death,  
birth of his two daughters,  
Navy service in World War II,  
rough-housing with his four brothers.

Dad returns to the womb suspended  
in darkness, muffled sounds outside  
mean nothing to him.  
He waits in his darkened room;  
and waits some more.