

**Wilderness House Literary Review 15/3**

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**CLIFF-HANGERS**

Mass grave, undramatic;  
dead actors move like zombies  
without a deus-ex-machina  
pulling strings.

Moving down the rutted lanes,  
their little acts repetitive  
of soap opera dramas.  
Some struggle for life  
reaching out beyond  
the borders of the lane  
beyond recipes, love affairs  
gone sour, yesterday's scandal.

Even poor Yorick  
saw he was a fool  
as he laughed gravely.

RECLAIMED

The wheat burns gold  
under the sun,  
and weaves back and forth  
in the wind.

The old houses lean  
as people make  
their way down  
to the inn.

The knights have gone,  
their castles fallen;  
only lonely pastors celebrate  
where bishops once processioned  
in lordly pomp.

The villagers still  
drink and feast  
in the grove of dark-leaved oaks,  
and worship the spirits  
of earth that were there  
before the castle crowned  
the nearby summit,  
before lord or knight or bishop  
had their rule  
in this quiet land.

The gods have returned  
to reclaim their own.

CIRCUS

Mirrors reflect the sights and sounds  
fed into them, minds mimic  
memories often without reflection,  
mirage of life, the playground of fools.

The clown smiles, the clown cries,  
taunted by children in the park -- or  
incessant gadflies out for a lark.

Spectators sweat in the galleries  
heavy with expectancy and musk  
for fanfare and pirouette  
that lifts even poor Pierrot man  
to reflect on the sights and sounds  
of circus life from backstage  
to the fantastic designs  
that trapezes make with their cargoes  
in arcs across the cosmic dome.