

Wilderness House Literary Review 17/4

Joyce Lazarus

Between Two Worlds

For our last visit I wear green,
wanting her to see spring
blooming beyond her view in bed,
with its antiseptic sheets and pillows that cradle her.
Between long naps, she says, "You look tired,"
staring straight at me.
When did ordinary words move me before?
My brother calls her "sweetie,"
playfully bending her fingers in his.
For just one instant time moves backwards.
She sleeps peacefully most of the day,
glimpsing distant meadows, faces of those gone before her.
I say, "I love you" and touch her shoulder and arm,
drawing her back towards me,
summoning her to the here and now
as the moment is slipping away.
She lies very still, her eyes opening, awake,
then whispers my name.

Wilderness House Literary Review 17/4

Advice for Gardeners and Parents

Choose a sunny spot,
plant seeds in good compost
and water gently to not disturb
the tender shoots.

Be patient.

A garden does not spring up overnight.

Expect some sleepless nights.

Anticipate that growth can be slow
and storms frequent.

Stakes will help the new sprouts
grow straight,

while letting branches stretch far and wide.

Add nutrients frequently to the soil
as plants mature.

Don't fence in the garden.

You'll learn that you can't chase away
all garden pests

or keep branches from bending
with every squall.

Careful tending to your plants' growth
and some luck

may bring you rewards,
as they one day bear fruit,
delight you with their colors,
unanticipated shapes,
and set down deep roots.