

Wilderness House Literary Review 18/1

Diane Webster

CROSSWALK ENCOUNTER

She shuffles across the crosswalk
like a Chinese maiden with bound feet
and still the black pickup truck revs
behind tinted-glass anonymity,
anger belches out dual mufflers
while the lady keeps between the lines
never slowing, never rushing her pace.

The black truck's grill grits
teeth-like grimace as the lady's head
bobs level with the hood
like a hood ornament in motion;
she strokes the chrome bumper
like a cat's back arching
for more attention, and this time
the beast purrs away down the street
after its prey safely steps on the curb.

CRUEL LOUD

Loud –
cruel and unusual punishment
to ask for quiet.
It would probably kill her,
implode, explode splattering all
with mega decibels;
deaf now so if I desire quiet
I can simply close my eyes
until she pounds on my desk
in reverberation fury
like a cartoon idiot
red and sweating bullets
even more so when I laugh.

OLD MAN SITS BY THE BUILDING

In the old man's mind
he feels like a little boy
scolded and told to sit
on that wooden chair
outside the principal's office.

He stares only as far as
his imagination pictures
images of getting even
with the neighbor kid
who threw a rock first.

Maybe hide in the bushes
in front of the kid's house,
and when he comes out,
trip him with a stick.

Maybe put gum
on his bicycle seat
and watch the girls point
and laugh at his butt.

Maybe conceal a belt
coiled up under his hat
and when this kid
gets close enough,
whip the belt out
and smack him repeatedly.

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Maybe sit there
like watching TV
until his chin rests
on his chest in a nap,
and he wakes up to
another program airing.