

**Wilderness House Literary Review 18/3**

*Cleo Griffith*  
**After You**

There were flowers and artworks,  
colorful, cheerful,  
full of loveliness and sun.

There was one room  
in my new spaciousness  
a bit untended,  
storage space for odds  
and endings.

It wasn't until guests  
could not see past this clutter  
that I cleaned up.

I realize now  
how the dark room  
detracted  
from my true dwelling.

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### Fire-Fighting Meeting

I'll be there. With many others.  
We will tell our stories in our voices,  
none quite alike, yet all smoke-choked,  
hair-singed, ash on foreheads.

Survival is key.  
Not the past survived,  
but future that must be, not for us,  
the old, scarred, and dusty, but for  
our daughters who must put out future flames,  
our sons who must master the art of rebuilding.

Our voices are not alike,  
our stories too much so.  
I'll be there.  
Every time.

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**Jack and Jill, After the Fall**

I let you fall and then I fell myself

you've experienced my arms as weak,

now dream softly of their strength --  
pretend in sleep there never was a challenge  
against which I would prove unsure

my arms, only flesh and bone,  
lie beneath you,

perhaps when we awake  
we will forget the awkward tumbles  
or if not,  
let us always sleep