

Wilderness House Literary Review 19/1

Patricia Joslin
One More Move

I live alone. No cat. The king mattress
no longer needed for sex replaced last month.

Exhausted, I fall asleep in minutes. Too many
thoughts and things to do. The move in weeks.

Boxes, sealed and labeled, crowd the kitchen
where once graced our family table. Donated.

Loveseats gone, along with his leather chair.
I'll keep the matching ottoman, pottery we collected.

But what about his mother's good dishes?
Our travel treasures? Old photos and journals?

Pack light. The new apartment is compact,
yet the 9th floor corner suite has treetop views

of the city and the steeple of my church. I think
about him, our children. His easy manner,

strong arms holding me. His last breath.
I sigh, smile and bend to fill another box.

Memories follow easily. No packing necessary.

Wilderness House Literary Review 19/1

Longing

I search for a sign
any widow might
flash of red feathers
whistle caw whistle
yes, lift me in song

Wilderness House Literary Review 19/1

Boccherini at the Bechtler Museum

With Picasso's *The Acrobat* as backdrop,
the violins, viola, cellist shuffle pages,
tune instruments, wait. At center
the guitarist stretches fingers, his right
thumbnail so long I see it from the back row.
The ensemble makes eye contact, then leaps
into Boccherini's *Fandango Quintet in D Major*—
all bows and fingers like birds in flight.
Synchronized breathing, phrasing, balance.
Technical fireworks explode, *vivacissimo*.
Musicians strum, slide, pluck, tap. It's the thumbnail
that I watch as it skitters across the strings
to dance *fandango*, castanets ready to capture
the syncopated rhythms of Madrid. Nostrils flare
as I transform, a flirtatious *terpsichorean*
in Charles III's court. My acrobatic moves—
zapateado, *compás*, *taconeo*
an amazement even to me!

Wilderness House Literary Review 19/1

Ode to the Quaking Aspen

Oh, the autumn elegance you display— ochre, saffron
purple the shadows as light dims, days grow short
giving over to night whispers as winds blow cold secrets.
You shelter great horned owls, small forest creatures,
your flattened stems instruments of shimmering sound.
Today, filtered golden rays mark each straight trunk
as matchsticks aligned in your wide tinder box,
horizontal lines of black bark lenticels breathe.
Aspens, you reach sun-drenched heights,
reproduce shoots with abandon to create
great clonal families that thrive, survive years.
Reign down your glory as winter approaches,
cover the landscape in jeweled tapestry. In time
you'll bow low to the damp earth, spent.

That is enough.