

Wilderness House Literary Review 2/4

Carolyn Gregory

Blue Hotel

All night, I rode the horse with my belongings strapped
to the saddle and in my backpack.

I checked the motel near the clay hills.

The scowling clerk did not like my looks –
perhaps it was my stained dress
or my wet, unruly hair,
maybe it was the largeness of my belly
or my nervous boyfriend.

Whatever the case, we packed up again
under the star-smudged sky
past the all-night dance club.
Its loud music rolled brassy out the door.
Finally, we came to the blue hotel.

We unloaded our blankets
and Jacob helped me down.
The door was crooked, unpainted
but the man at the desk gave us our room key
for a week's cash.

Climbing wooden steps,
we passed a fat lady with grocery bags stuffed
with kale and oranges.
In the room, green striped wallpaper flared
over a porcelain sink.

Rose light washed the mirror
where a single angel stood, unexpected,
carrying golden ornaments.

Aching from the night journey,
my back arched in the sheets
as the labor started at last

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and my son pushed out of me,
flooding the city with ribbons of light.