

Wilderness House Literary Review 5/3

Jon Stocks

Severn Acts of Mercy

First he would salvage the old photographs

The half lit Edwardian drawing room

Glimpse of another dimension

Faces gaze furtively wary of change.

The Shibboleth of all desires, here

Distilled in letters, old documents

Residuals and marginalia

The shards of benign fragmentation.

He will protect the tiny girl that died

With her daughter, haemorrhaged after birth

And the soldier on the Somme, alluding

To the consequences of indiscretions.

He will keep the prayer books from the library

Boxes full of tissue medals, trophies

Won on distant sun kissed playing fields

Evocative of languid, post war ease.

And this long lost, blurred, half focused world

The loose plasticity of flowing time

He will store in a corner of his mind

The heart beats, the tear stained miseries.

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That Summer

You could fry eggs on urban pavements
With thick black tar still sticky on your boots
Wipe sweaty hands on dripping overalls
Glance at her legs as you filled her up
Inhaling the luscious petrol fumes.

You were bewitched and mesmerized
Out of your numbed mind you changed tyres
The beat from the Clash bouncing off the walls
Pumping the wheel nuts in a frenzy
Of introspective adolescent angst.

That hot summer of dislocation
When first love was fluid, slipping through your hands
In explicit, exquisite agonies
The viscous oil of first rejection
Waiting for the hungry clouds to break.

Beyond the parched earth, loitered the word
As tangled thoughts twisted into poetry.