

## Wilderness House Literary Review 5/4

*Aren Stone*

### **Grief**

Worn so deeply now  
you'd swear it was an illness,  
a complicated elegy  
rising unexpectedly  
like water from a spring  
rendering neither understanding  
nor relief.

Today I put your death certificate  
in a file folder,  
a mundane manila  
held briefly to my heart.  
It should be made out of something  
animalistic, like vellum,  
lavish,  
like the softest satin,  
or sharp and unyielding,  
twisted metal and shards.

Though the document is clear,  
will I ever reconcile  
the physics of your departure  
with the need to hear your voice?

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### Insomnia 1

all night you turn over and  
damn each time you do  
your mind keeps going through doors but it's  
not like there's an opening just  
doors slamming shut and finally one  
opens and there you are and  
another opens and there you are like  
when you play solitaire and you keep turning over  
the same cards that you don't need anymore  
you can't get  
away from yourself and then  
the door opens and you see yourself again and  
gasp at all those track marks on your arms  
not from needles but from this damn train this train of  
thought chugging up and down  
all night  
all night long

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### January

6th

It is 4 degrees.

The house is drafty and  
cold, cold,  
cold legs, cold face.

4 degrees and windy,  
I dream of high desert.

Joshua trees,  
coyote,  
dry streambeds;  
landscape of unforgiving despair  
if you are lost in it,  
infinite possibility  
if you know where you are.

16th

7 below 0    windchill 30 below,  
schools all over cancelled  
due to extreme cold.  
Furnace can't keep up.  
Curtains closed,  
too cold  
to move  
from the nest.

20th

losing power  
like  
losing language  
like  
losing the top layer of skin  
like  
losing breath  
like  
losing heart  
like  
cold, cold, and more cold.

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27th

Snow on the beach  
peopled only by ocean-loving fools,  
wind literally breathtaking.  
Close to the water a curve of sea scallop shell,  
smooth and pink.  
If the other half were attached  
my hand would fit inside like a five-tentacled animal  
but it's unattached and empty,  
unattached and empty  
as the breath  
leaving my body  
on this cold, cold beach.

31st

It is light longer already.  
Everything breathes  
a little easier.