

## Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

*Helen Peterson*

### **Agamous**

Rings hide in the good sugar bowl  
rinsed clean with the soap and water  
required to pry them from finger.

Thanksgiving, a clink within the bowl  
as I pull it from the shelf, the indent  
still creases the skin, the sound  
a hollow promise.

Time will fill the bed, pillows bent  
by arms and knees , time will heal  
the flesh, fill the void with life unbound

from platinum or gold, diamonds  
just coal freed from heat.

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How I Knew

What, you mean besides the cramps? The gas?  
The heaviness leaning sore against my back?

Do you want a more cosmic answer? A sense like  
sonar, bouncing off something within me that wasn't there before?  
Sorry, my man.

I can't explain how other women walk up to me and know.  
How could I tell you? I don't really understand it myself.  
It is a woman thing. Let us leave it at that.

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The English Major Comes Home  
He changes Bob's Gas and Go  
to Robert's Lubitorium, causes consternation  
among the locals who sneak in hoping  
to see real nipples for a change, forced  
to make do with the same old eesome  
centerfolds he covers over, paternal,  
with more beneficial print, grumbling  
to his lazy brother to stop being so  
ergophobic, plotting escape  
writing grammatical queries  
Webster open, a restless windelstraw  
seeking pulchritudinous pastures.

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### Laying it Down/ Picking it Up

Rev. Peacham lays some sermocination down  
picks up the row of white teachers dressed in blacks  
and browns, dropping flowers on the altar, lift  
their hands to the beat as a line of jr. high kids  
work their way down the congregation carrying Nick  
Jonas posters and American Girl Dolls, their hollowed  
out souls fill to brimming, setting offerings there at the urn  
holding the ashes of their friend and her undiagnosed  
leukemia that settle in a hush of hallelujahs

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You Cut me Deep

Little girls should know, My Little Pony's  
pink plastic spirals firm in their teeth ,  
getting the right angle while they comb  
out the tails that true unicorn horns go limp  
unless nestled in the laps of virgins, impaling  
all comers trapping fair ladies neath yonder tree

Good thing to discover before growing up  
stripped bare in the backs of Volvos  
pressed deep in the dirt under bleachers  
laid wide across their own brass beds  
having hearts cut through with every thrust