

**Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3**

*Patricia Wellingham-Jones*  
**White Witch**

She arranges river stones  
water-worn and rounded  
in a circle large enough  
to stand in, eases the final stone  
to close the gap

Eyes closed  
herbs gathered in her hands  
she sends thoughts of health and light  
through the turgid air

Doesn't consider herself strange  
not a witch of any hue  
just another healer  
in a world needing  
help

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**Dream Language**

Your hand twitches  
You sink into sleep  
as you do whenever you sit  
Body at rest  
the right hand clasps  
a folded paper towel in lax fingers  
The left hand  
eloquent  
rises to your lips  
extends cupped as if holding a chalice  
scrabbles at the snaps in your shirt  
lies relaxed on your thigh  
then taps a dance rhythm  
Your hands  
speak a dream language  
your tongue and ear  
no longer master

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### Masks

Grins and leers and glaring eyes  
fill the guest room closet,  
hang in tiers on the enclosing walls.

Waves of spirits with bodies cast-off  
slither through stale air.

Teens shiver on opening the door,  
children refuse to sleep in that room,  
toddlers shriek in their parents' arms.

Children know their own faces  
could hang on those walls.  
Children grow, learn to apply  
layer after translucent layer.

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### Meeting of the Tribes

"Meeting of the Tribes," etching by Harriett Spira

Five women huddle,  
heads close together,  
profiles only —  
five sharp-featured faces,  
lips firm, eyes hooded  
in concentration.  
Tribal markings  
on gaunt cheekbones,  
hair black or gray  
hangs unstyled  
to strong shoulders.  
These women  
I'd like on my side.  
I'd like to live in their circle  
of feminine power.  
I'd like them to  
dandle my baby daughter,  
teach her to be  
such a woman.

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