

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

Zvi A. Sesling
Corner Drunk

He sits on the corner
disheveled, smelly
whiskey bottle
wrapped in brown paper bag
a paper cup
with three pennies inside
waiting for enough
to buy another
cheap bottle
before someone
steals his money
snatches his dream
takes his life

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The Collector of Calamities

sits in his study reading newspapers
with scissors on his desk
he cuts out snippets of random
tragedies

A brick from the 17th
floor of a building in Montreal
falls and hits a woman eating lunch
at a sidewalk cafe with her husband

A car goes on a highway the wrong way
in Connecticut and into a family of
seven riding to the beach and all seven die

Someone doesn't see a stop sign and strikes
a child in a crosswalk who is walking home
from school

Black and white newsprint cut out, placed
in a bowl, a record of lives extinguished
like flames, a history of calamities by a
collector who has survived big and small
calamities and sees his survival in others' deaths.

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Elvira

She was queen of the night
of the late show
straight black hair
black jump suit
that displayed ample cleavage
long black fingernails
she waved on screen
when she hosted
the horror movies on
Friday nights

You would watch the
Grade B flicks just to
see her open the show
see her do her schticks
during breaks and say
goodnight and you thought
I'd give my life to spend
a night with her
Maybe you would have

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Vampires

Stink blood, the smell of rot
they lift their cups to eternal life
prowl at night to find a wandering
child, homeless sleeper, street
walker, drunken sailor, humanity's
juice is what they seek, a fountain
of youth, pure blood to send down
the throat or sucked from bites
legends of the living, night worshippers

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Attic
for Ken H.

Old dust collecting newer
trapped bugs dead of old age
floorboard faded despite no sun
cobwebs reminders of spider homes
like Canyon de Chelly
mosaic squirrel and mouse droppings
cardboard boxes eaten through nested in
old rug moth eaten, moths eaten by spiders
it will take weeks to clear it all