

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/4

Holly Day
In Passing

I wish she'd come back as a vampire,
or a zombie, or even a dog. I just wish
she'd come back. my grandfather
is so alone it's just not right.

it'd be something to see my grandmother
floating through the air, white as a sheet
cloaked in black, fishnet hose, Elvira breasts
lips half-parted over razor-sharp teeth

or stumbling across the yard, arms held out
awkward in front of her, fingers weakly grasping
with carnivorous intent, eyes open, unseeing
death perpetually rattling in every moaning step

or running up the back stoop, young again, a pup
leaping against my grandfather's legs
snout upturned in a sloppy kiss, every bit a dog
but with my grandmother's soul inside, peeking through
every once in a while

to let the world know
she's still here.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/4

Tentacles

I close my eyes and imagine
he's an octopus, slithering tentacles
all over my body
one large, supple, firm snake
slipping in

I open my eyes and see
he's still a man
and I like this man
but I like the octopus more

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/4

The Deal

in my living room is a woman
with black hair over her face, white skin
dirt under her chipped nails
water dripping in a puddle around her as if
pouring out of her very skin, no
it's blood

in the bedroom, shadows undulate
like tentacles underwater
the bedcovers writhe as though hiding a family
of sick sea serpents
or rabid squirrels

in my kitchen is a man
with fire for eyes, a mouth full of grubs, skin
criss-crossed with old scars and new bruises
hanging in mid-air as if
dangling by a hook

ever since I bought that cursed locked storage chest
at the boarded-up second-hand store
from that guy with the sinister laugh and the bad facial hair
things just haven't been the same around here

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/4

1000 Poems

I am looking for your body
in these stacks of poetry
because I know it's sketched somewhere in there
if I lay the pages out right

I'll find you, a silhouette
of dots and dashes, words
and blank spaces
arms and legs and a sometime-smile
you're in here somewhere

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/4

The Wolf at the Door

ten years later and he's
here again, he tells me
I have to share our son now
that my husband has done a great job
playing father
but now it's time for him to take over. Ten years,

no birthday cards, no phone calls, no money,
and he's back.

my husband doesn't say a thing but I
can see the back of his jaw working, worrying
the molars with the hairline cracks
the teeth that were perfect up until a week ago.
I want so bad to tell him everything
will be all right, we will win this thing
but I can't.

across the table from me, my son's
biological father talks about
being too young to know better, the regrets
he's carried with him since leaving
about the spare bedroom he has in his house
how he knows he can be a good father now.
I think about the 12-year-old at school
oblivious to this stranger's intent
and try not to cry.