

Wilderness House Literary Review 7/3

Paul David Adkins

THE FLEA MARKET FIELD JACKET

My teenage daughter, sucker for schlock,
shrugged the jacket on, hugged and zipped it,
wore it home.

She twirled for us --
her precious find
of olive drab and cotton.
She shot upstairs for floor-length mirror,

snapped up pocket flaps,
discovered -- yellow, creased --
a photo of a soldier wearing
that jacket.

Written on the back --

Roewitz, Germany

5/8/45

V.E. Day and no rest

She brought the photo back.
The vendor laughed,
We see some crazy selling now.
People don't care.
They just want the money.
Had I known of keepsakes in the pocket,
I would have charged more.

He flipped the picture, read --

Don't I look tired

Well I am

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THE HOARDER IS HOSPITALIZED

*So now they have the city council
on their side.*

The tired trick of sending off

the infirm

while anyone who could snatch a dime
would salvage the wreck of his life,
smash the beached casks
in search of treasure.

His ex-wife
popped from her coven
to sniff the ruins, then
scurried at the sight
of his lawyer.

But even he
could not halt
the cleanup
ordered by the court –

just ensured the shell of house
and furniture remained
his.

*You may
as well
keep me
here forever.*

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The house would freeze without
his insulating
attic trash.

What if
they cinched his dripping spigot
dry?

He would have
to steal more bags.

Stanza Break

*When I die
my dust will drift
too fine to even draw
a cough
among the hushed
mourners.*

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MY FATHER'S CHOLESTEROL MEDICINE

The label read:

*Take one tablet per day
forever.*

My mother scolded –

*Never say Forever.
You cannot take it back.*

She picked the F
like a scab
from every bottle.

She dragged me
to the cabinet,
pointed at the tear.

*I will not,
she snapped,
allow this word
in my house.
Not now.
Or ever.*