

Wilderness House Literary Review 8/1

Anne Drury
THE FIRE PIT

Talk floats here and there.
People come and go. She hides
chewed fingers inside of her gloves.

I've seen her walk the
circle of flat-topped stones,
barefoot, while cold snow swirls,

swallowing whole a strangled cry;
seen the soles of her boots melted,
from sitting too close, too long.

She cries for the little girls in El Salvador,
their blood-soaked dresses; the mango rains
come to West Africa and the midwife

dead in childbirth. Only the ocean
draws like the fire pit, she says.
Even her brother, the Scarecrow,

a slim man stuffed with straw,
as many times as he's been burned,
still plays ball.

She has an affinity for fire,
the crazy lady of the fire pit;
rows of firewood, split

and stacked, please her.
Swirl sage and absinthe in a glass,
she says, we're all safe here.

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AND YOU MY FATHER

It's leaking out
the yolk of the sun
geese fly farm to pond
a simple wedge in the night sky

Tonight it's the same
same words over and over again
slipping out between the wine
and cracker crumbs

Hold up that holy
spray of words to the light
polish them bright
they will shine like before

Let me put your socks on
clip your yellow toenails
on the other side of the wall
rains bang winds blow

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SPRING

Was it thunder from a blue sky
or the first new shoots of spring
that woke me up?

Either way, the fog has cleared,
the sea parted, spray spun

in numerous separate directions
insinuating wet tendrils between
cold and warmth, soil and sky
quietly nudging the season open

It's been a long cold winter but
there are some who believe;
maybe this year
will be better than the last

Just tonight the
great big full moon
swallowed this seed of discontent
indigenous to the world we live in
a world lit dimly at best

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GRIEF

Take this bitter little pill of fear
curled inside my cold moist palm
smooth it out, calm it down
pet it's hard insistent head
In dreams
I bite into the slim cruel rim
of my wine glass
until it shatters in my mouth;
then there is nothing to do
but chew
Your grief is my grief
Thank god I don't already have
so much of my own grief;
we suffer like this, together, apart,
this grief; I guess, like Everest,
because we are here