

Wilderness House Literary Review 8/2

Saga Ringmar

My Grandfather's Fiftieth Birthday

Love is
simple conversation and
gestures motioning to
some unknown chirping
creature: reality.

The blurred painting
at the end of the
hall with its blotchy
history or
my grandfather's fiftieth
birthday which they still
talk about.

Oh, back then were
merry days! Frilly
dresses and false teeth
all the same shade
of beige. Dates punched
into the calendar but
yesterday's tendencies
still remain:
a sun that never seems
to set and colorful
balloons deflating quietly
and without haste.

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Bedroom

Socks in your under-
wear, in the strings
of your matted hair. Dog's
nose
everywhere. The curtain
wraps your bra
into a three-fold-happy-birthday
present.

Past,
future all curdling
like milky sheets, a damp
blanket hugs her thighs and
my ring remains lost in your
trouser pocket.

I search, cry, search
some more and tears bubble like
fish
flapping on my fleshy cheeks.

I turn your jean
pocket
inside-out
but it's empty.

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Train

For every curve
a gravestone
for every fickle thought —
the purple eyelid of
the rising moon.
We board the train at midnight
and with a heavy sigh she
sets to her track, the black
bubble of the universe
heaving her into the night.
Steam wisps and the railroad
dips into a puddle
before it disappears.

Powerful and relentless is she!
Baring clogs and scrap and
bronze, pounding like a fist.
Merciless and unyielding is she!
The mechanical teeth in nature's
soft green mouth.
Subconscious, thick and
thoughtless.

At least that's what I thought.
But then I saw a child's hand
wipe the mist from the window
and the eyes that blinked
at the great outside--
two brilliant moons.