

Wilderness House Literary Review 8/4

Diane Webster

WITHOUT A GLANCE BEHIND

Old tree stump in front
of the house for sale
wears a shingled roof,
cut out wooden windows,
and a tiny door always locked
to the concentric growth rings
forever dormant inside
like a woman's age until 80
when each year afterward bellows
in triumph, in defiance,
in cane-pounding double-dare-you
until a for sale sign silences all
except the squirrel scrambling
over miniature and man-sized shingles
without a glance behind.

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MARCH SNOW

So smug under cloudy breeze
I smother world
in overnight ease
and defy sunshine
with squinty-eyed brilliance
until an icicle stake plunges,
and I cringe.
I skulk into northern shadows
to conserve existence in drifty depths
of freeze-thaw hardness
to accept amputated limbs
with tears absorbed
into earth's thirsty mouth
until only a nugget rests in mud
by tomorrow gone into terra gut.
But a wisp evaporates
skyward on invisible wings
to conceal in clouds
until frosty breath
beckons again.

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TREASURED GATHERED

The lawn displays
a gathering of pine cones.
Little girl's private
Easter egg hunt?
Or wide-eyed squirrel
with only two paws?