

Wilderness House Literary Review 8/4

Joann Grisetti
The Dying Room

We read.

Cheap paperback novels – short, fast,
sitting on her bed.

Between the spoken words
unspoken thoughts litter the room
filling the dusty corners like so much
detritus worn from her former self.

My voice grows weak,
and tired, but never as tired
or weak as she, scored with wrinkles,
bones growing caves.

I look past her yellowed skin
to the mother who read to me
when measles made the rounds;

to the woman who nourished
her family and gave us the
back bone to face the world.

I bathe her, I comb her hair,
I kiss her cheek;
I close her eyes.

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