

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/3

Doug Bolling
Homework

Where you wavered between
dark and light,

small rabbit across green carpets
stretching toward doors you
dared not open,

forbiddings of spaces
unseen, imagined.

You the small flower
growing the petals
of yourself invisibly
day by day.

Your dreams of shadows
swirling inside the
monster closet,
under stairs,
just behind
just ahead

shapings more real
than morning storms
ravaging the roof
knocking locust branches
against your window.

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The years of your growth
a mystery unmeasured,
suspension somewhere
between guilts and grace.

Somehow your voice
finding words,
becoming you.

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Early Travels

Darkness opens the inner eye
to new ways of seeing.
What has been exiled
returns like the tide,
like the missing child
restored to the mother
who bore, cradled, made of
world a purity of song
beyond the words, the fret.

As a child I traveled the shadows
believing in their mystery,
how that took me to
places no light
had measured.

Outside I became nighttime
witness to a house's heft become
thin as paper, more mirage
than substance,
daylight realness no more
than haunted air.

I had heard the word love
whispered behind walls
and once among strangers
in the wooded park.

The moments when I wondered
how much of that
was light,
how much
shadow.

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Uncle Samuel

You who believed us and guided our steps
even through graveyard grasses
saying there is more to life
than death.

We followed you as children
begging your eyes,
your touch.

It rained most of the summer
as you climbed through the hills
in your searchings, gathering
light from shadow.

We put everything on you.
The whole weight of the world
huge in its mysteries.

You who climbed and vanished
and came down through the
pine forest to tell the
stories of those who
lived before time
and after.