

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/3

John Grey
DAWNING

Eos dispenses dew from twin amphoras.
Leaves glisten in fresh light.
Sun sketches itself in each globule
like the Bible on the head of a pin.
I waken, a smudge on a perfect reflection,
stretch by the window,
untwist my limbs, burnish a forgotten skin.
Birds decorate the sky like ribbons.
Brightness trumps night's broken sluice.

Abraham's water of wisdom
will burn off once the day gets serious.
For now, the beginning floats here
and there, like silver garments,
slowly doffed by rising angels.
My mind takes up the challenge.
A daily occurrence may yet be the first time.

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LIGHTNING STRIKE

The rain gave no forewarning.
Just a drizzle really.
And sure the thunder roared
but doesn't it always.
I've long since closed my ears to thunder.
And then it rained a little harder
but I've a roof to take care of that.
Those hardy tiles
have parried more blows
than a lightweight champ.
So whoever tossed that electric spear...
I never saw it coming.
Didn't expect it.
Had no idea what unprovoked fury can do.
One blinding flash
and you ripped open my oak tree
at the heart.
I could smell the burning
even though my shuttered window.
Trunk and limb and leaf and preconception.
all aflame that stormy night.

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THE OLD MAN WAS A SAILOR

I thought I saw the coastline
but that's what comes
from nodding off
in a favorite chair.

And my father
was beside me
guiding the skiff
toward shore

but you can't have it both ways,
be my age
and a child
with my life
in his hard gripping hands.

Sun, moon, stars,
and the old man's face. . .
what better to guide us.

So what if it wasn't land at all
but dark clouds gathering
on the horizon.

You can't have it either way.
Calm as you like
and a perilous storm.

I sail my own vessel now.
A chair it is.
The ways are many
and sleep decides.