

**Wilderness House Literary Review 9/4**

*Cleo Griffith*  
**Nevers and Nettles**

I mailed a letter today--  
went out of my way  
to an out-of-town place,  
sent a letter to you -  
no return address,  
full of zeros and nevers,  
blackness and nettles,  
they are not mine,  
I am returning them,  
you left them with me,  
remember?

Dumped them in the hall  
so I could not follow you  
as you suddenly left,  
laughed and left,  
like that!

But today  
I crammed an envelope full  
of those zeros, nevers,  
blackness and nettles.  
My exit is clean.  
I mailed the letter

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### Rescuer With Scissors

What kind of rescue is this,  
you who said you would save me from myself?  
You never looked at what that was.  
You saw yourself as the one who sacrifices  
to give me a solid grounding  
yet it was your feet that walked unsteady  
on an earth which would not hold still,  
you who were unhappy with your place  
oblivious to my slow sinking into apathy.  
News headlines numbed me but I couldn't  
stop reading them and when you handed me scissors,  
said cut out those words that most offend you,  
those photos that break your heart  
and you seemed so sure that would help  
you seemed so sure...  
sad teacher of what you cannot follow  
what words do you need banished?  
I still have the scissors. I will cut them out.

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### Are There Swallows?

Are there swallows where you are,  
the kind that swoop low along the ground--  
flash past, glimpse of winged guardian?  
Think of me when this startling bird  
comes out of nowhere, slants past you.  
It will not hover, it will only dart  
once, twice, and be gone. Are there  
swallows where you are? Am I?