

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/4

James Keane
Kathy

I was a year out of college – a four-year college –
the year you were born. And now I am sufficiently

dated, as Roethke might have said (elated
you aren't dead), to be your father or

lover. Or, as anyone else might have said, to
know better. But I do know better. When you breathe

the air of perfect silence, I know – no gasp,
no groan, no rasp, no violence to stifle the strident

motion your arms cradle, your legs churn swimming
an upright ocean of pure light, brimming

with sweat, till there's nowhere left to go
and breathing beauty to forget. Or, Kathy,

regret.

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/4

And Then

there's nothing left to a winter morning
in the pen below the ramp to the terminal

but the hump, hump, hump a homeless
hulk dumps behind a homeless face

blank and bare as any bitch mounted in
the middle of any open field. Rigid

buses side by side in silence yield
to the rank violence, frigid as

the heated commuters they will carry to
thrive anywhere that isn't *down there*,

where nothing will survive no good
reason to plead, intercede, or care.

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/4

Sitting In The Park Of A Young Couple

Across the street
from my poems three
patrol cars con-
verge to a halt: Charging

over the park grass
you hoist your baby boy.

Monologues
melting into my lap go
lagging
begging: Who is emerging
from the bicycle shop
on foot with six policemen.

Why are you flipping out

ice cream lids – then arching
your tummy over taut
arms and legs. Over

pasty footlights
gleaming bumps baby
boy, now grinding
to a halt: Suddenly your

legs and arms
flop, both hands
beseeching, till
back bumps baby
boy jiggling

jiggling

jiggling

jiggling – *May my*

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/4

*hands quietly
part your hands,
gently spread
my arms, your legs
to reach, reach
reaching
like a late-night Mummy
screeching
in silence
till baby boy plunges
giggling
giggling

giggling
all over
your tummy.*

Previously published in the poetry chapbook *What Comes Next*
by James Keane (Finishing Line Press).