

**Wilderness House Literary Review 12/4**

*Nick Conrad*

**Wild Turkey in the Rain**

Rain drenched, each step was studied,  
as if skirting quick sand.

Stretching his neck into  
a thin vertical line,

he swiveled his gaze, red wattle  
swaying, to survey the well

ploughed field. His wings drooped.  
I would like to say that some

ancestral sense of loss  
pervaded in that instant

his stick and feathers frame.  
But with a brain the size

of a few peas, I rather think  
it was just that some genetic

wiring briefly shorted out  
his innate timidity:

for an instant, he did not  
seek cover; rather, as if

having forgotten his  
devolved state, he raised a claw.  
Silence

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Is not; is the absence of the whirring  
hydra-headed siren mouthing an endless  
mix of pitches, come-ons, flirtations, of coy intonations;  
is not birds chirping; is not a parakeet singing  
a song only it knows; is what possesses  
distant trees, their branches writhing  
in the wind like grasping fingers; is what  
encloses the fish in the river as it peers up;  
the praying mantis gazing back; the dragonfly  
hovering nearby; is what rests within a stone;  
is what enwraps the walnut's shell shrouded seed.