

## Wilderness House Literary Review 14/1

*David Henson*

### **The Old Woman Has Two Big Dogs**

SHE BROOMSTICKS THEM A TOUCH MEAN SO when Death tries to jimmy the basement window, they'll hear the wood groan or smell his dark breath, rush downstairs and rip him apart.

They won't let Death midnight from behind a wall, curl in the nape of her neck and nibble away her throat like cheese.

One day they snarl down the drapes when a delivery man peeks in. Not fooled, she royals the curtains 'round her, swings open the door and smiles an invitation to tea. Don't mind them — they never bite. But he's too shrewd, hands her a package and pretends to leave.

That night she wakes up in a pool, realizing Death could seep from underground. Colorless. Odorless. Tasteless. Invisible. Even now curled up beside her in bed. She edges her palm along the sheet, calls the brutes up from the floor and scratches one behind the ear.