

Wilderness House Literary Review 16/2

Cameron Morse

The Fly

There's a fly buzzing in here
I don't want to kill,
so I open the door and turn away.
When the noise is gone,
I close the door, but after a moment
the mad electric crackle
resumes, so I open the door again,
hoping my discreet invitation
to leave will one day be accepted.

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Gutter Babies

May feathers helicopter
seed pods. Escape
pods that have broken
with the bough crash
land in my gutter.

A flowerbed of seedlings,
a row of ill-fated green
beans that burst in the soil
collected up there, in the sky.

One delicate finger
digging down networks
the drippy sludge I scoop
in the garden glove, bag
for the garbage can.

Along the same axis—root
to shoot—a pink stalk
rises skyward photosynthesizing
sunlight briefly. Blindly
reaching. Will you
hold my hand? I wonder
if we stood, if we ever stood a chance.

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The Hollow

A hollow in the anaconda
gnarls of the back
yard maple had collected
a green puddle by
the mosquito-infested summer
we moved in. A crust
of cement suggested an attempt
to fill in the cesspool.
Without cement I made do with
the rocks in my yard, chunks
of asphalt from walks
with Theo, rail road spikes.
Each item I placed in the egg
water displaced more of
the egg water, raising its line
above the sinister cradle's rim.

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Tornado Siren

You can see the tornado
siren from the house
I grew up in. The first
Wednesday of the month
tore through the studs
and the sheet rock.
No megaphone within sight here,
though. Our first
Wednesdays croon in the woods.
Theo likes the story
Grandma and Mariah stumbled down
to the basement in the night
to the woo of the siren
when we were all living together.
Our camaraderie in the dark.
Like the time I slept over
at the Stolberg's and the whole
family piled on the pullout mattress
with Michael and me, nine faces
flickering blue to the cyclone.
Lili says boys obsessed
with dinosaurs feel powerless.
Theo was afraid of thunder before I
taught him to shout in the rain.

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The Seedlings

My gutters must be dirty
for these green
umbrellas
to be opening up there.

Nosecones blindly
thrusting.
Not enough
fuel for the return journey.