

Wilderness House Literary Review 1/2

Mouse Trap

When I was very young, I was placed in charge of setting a mousetrap.
I baited it with cheese and set the trap by the back legs of an old sofa.
Then, I laid on my belly, hands under my chin to watch.

I think I must have fallen asleep, because
when I awoke the mouse was already in front of the trap.
His little whiskers twittered as he slowly advanced, sniffing the air.

To the mouse, I must have looked so big that I effectively disappeared.
His tiny feet pushed him forward a tiny fraction of an inch at a time.
Surely he would see the trap and run away.

But no.
He smelled the cheese and advanced on it after a long pause.
I closed my eyes.

I couldn't stand to watch, but I couldn't keep from watching.
The mouse looked around to see if there was any danger.
Then he nibbled a tiny piece of cheese.

He ate it thoroughly.
Then he took another nibble.
I began to think the trap was faulty and would not work when SNAP!

The neck of the mouse was broken.
A little piece of cheese protruded from his v-shaped jaw.
He went without a twitch.

-- Gary Lehmann