

Wilderness House Literary Review 19/4

Sonia Teodorescu

I Brought Five Cents, for Poppies

She watched me sometime, mirrors and reflections realized
the colors in her eyes,
when the morning sun caught her face.

She wants a bouquet, roses and tulips,
pink, like her lipstick. She wants to hold them.

She asks the stars if
it's true that men are from Mars and
can only grow gardens through blood.

The sun touches her eyes to blind her,
she asks for flowers, he gives her broken words.

I sit when it rains and look
out past the windowpane and in the dark glass I catch
his eye.

He watches with me to see the world cry,
he's the one who sees tears, not I.

My words wait, for a time. There is no storm. The sun's gone
the wind's strong and warm, a Sunday blue.

I asked for flower petals, bright and bold. He gave me
butterfly wings,
gently used.

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Color Me In

I get hungry for stop signs: windowpanes and door frames,
pedestrian crossing lines and lace

made from stairs and stripes, bites of sky,
that come in through the walls to leak down to the floor.

Peaches and clementines blur, in the air where arcs are
circles and spheres and flavored picture frames in frosting,

rolling two seconds into a corner you
will never reach to retrieve them from.

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A Scarlet Letter Assignment

The Poet said, they tear butterfly wings. I said, they bend them.
He said, he fumbled his words. Well, I'll say, I took them
and, crumpled, gave them on to you.

You promised me too much, or yourself too little,
or something of the sort, you pretend to know
just where you're going, well, I'm your guide, and I'm no Virgil
or Beatrice. For that matter, you're no Dante.

You keep saying there's some perfection in us,
you know well, there only ever could have been if
we dreamed hard enough, screwed up our eyes against the sun enough,
refused to look, what?

Everyone needs a looking-glass? Not us, we have each other's eyes,
or, you certainly have mine. Tell me, what do you see in them?
Nothing, because I'm the one who's blind.

And if all you ever see are the boxes you're so sure you don't live in,
then so you do- there are more than boxes. I say,
I live in a sphere, all around me, and some days I manage a glimpse,
past it,
the longer I gaze into that mirror.

We both live in glass houses, neither of us
has any business throwing stones,
or so I would have said, hellfire and the alphabet
be damned, or not, you swore off
any protection to me, promised
if there are gods it's us only, and then
took some giant pen, drew again
another box around my feet,

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wrote poems into my notebook
with a red you can't see.

So curse, I'll say it,
with a dash, straight through the end
of Go-, 'cause I'm His least favorite,
or so he said, well,
the sky is glass if you ask the sea,
He has no reason to be
throwing stones to shatter so the ground.

And because I was taught
to never step on shards you cause,
I took too many steps back from us
and crushed instead a flower.
In its petals I'm sure
you hid secret from me words.

If I took every note you left me,
ink bleeding through the pages and
scattered paint drops in the sand,
I'd have a volume of love poems,
each grown from a careful lie.

And sugar is sugar. If spun fine,
sugar doesn't tear, it doesn't bend, either.
I'll guess I was wrong then, and watch it dissolve
as the rain falls.