

Wilderness House Literary Review 20/1

Emalisa Rose

Leaning into sisterhood

We'd pass homes like these on the way to the country

cookie cut storybook cottages with green sparkling grass
statues of mermaids and seahorses and an acre of sunflowers delighting
the two city sisters escaping the noise and pollution for those two weeks
each summer to visit our grandmother

as we'd watch from the train windows conjuring stories of people who
lived in those cream colored houses

with wrap-around porches, family dogs and flags of our country, flown
high

as the two city girls

from those Brooklyn brick projects leaned into sisterhood connecting..with
miles riding by.

Bad boyfriends, gray hairs, old 45s

I count nests now. On my morningtime walk, round the pond's semi-circle.

I used to count dollars, lost boyfriends, gray hairs, old 45s and the lip-
sticks I'd buy

in pursuit of the pinnacle pink.

But it's nests, now. On these lighter days Autumn, as leaves fall with
words on my fingertips

baring the branches, where I find what the trees had been hiding through
the pink days of Summer.

Nine on the knee

There were stars on the ceiling. They glittered in gold and danced in your
eyes, diverting the theme of your hospital visit.

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There were nine on your knee.

Falling off from the bike you were learning to ride, you were bathing in blood and needed some stitches.

Pink bows in your hair, perfect in place, not a braid out of line. You held Rainbow Brite the whole time.