

## Wilderness House Literary Review 20/1

*Lindsey Peacock*

### **Monkey bars are a lot like love**

I shattered both arms  
when I was 6.  
The monkey bars at  
the school playground  
were too tempting  
and I had too much to prove.  
They were meant for  
“the big kids.”  
I took that as a challenge.  
I had too much bravery  
for my tiny body.  
A sudden slip  
sent me tumbling.  
A 40-pound Icarus  
overtaken by  
first-grader hubris.  
Now, almost 40,  
your kindness  
makes me brave again  
despite  
one crackling  
arthritic elbow  
two  
failed marriages  
three  
more fractured limbs.  
I wrap my arms around you  
grounding us  
eyes squeezed shut.  
I tighten my grip  
pray my mended bones  
can hold you here.  
After three decades of

## Wilderness House Literary Review 20/1

lessons and practice  
I see I'm not  
plummeting to earth again—  
instead  
you're my soft landing.

## Wilderness House Literary Review 20/1

### Fried green tomatoes

You gave me my last taste of this unripened fruit. It was never my favourite, but you swore yours were worth it. "Set aside your white-knuckled opinions and just try a bite." I was skeptical—microwaved hot dogs were more suited to your kitchen skills—as you dragged the heirloom cast iron from its hiding place. Heated the canola until it sputtered. Hand-selected two perfect gritty patties. Fried the double-battered pucks until they transformed into golden, crispy morsels.

Now, that pan is spotted with rust. My tears spatter on my own plate of blond cornmeal. You were right. You're gone, and mine will never measure up.