

## Wilderness House Literary Review 20/4

*Sam Hendrian*  
"Half-Open Arms"

Watched your invisible presence disappear  
Which is kind of an oxymoron  
Unless you're a ghost chaser like me  
Determined to cherish the intangible.

Everyone's got a delusion of choice  
But it's gotta come from somewhere,  
Some reservoir of truth  
Obscured by tourist traps.

You've had plenty of opportunities  
To play catch-up,  
To utilize the latest NASA technology  
And turn a light year into right here.

Still you remain the queen of indecision,  
The primary advocate for maybe  
Whose legendary games of hot-n-cold  
Are being considered for the Olympics.

I should forget about you immediately  
Except then I'd stop smiling,  
Stop frowning,  
Stop feeling anything worth feeling.

Well, doubt leads to love,  
Certainty leads to expedited pain  
So I'll keep on questioning my way  
Into your half-open arms.

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### “Miraculous Coincidences”

Beat himself up before bed  
In between asking a routine question:  
If I hold no space for myself  
How can I hold it for others?

A wannabe dad on a childless landscape  
Crawling toward ways he can be useful  
Or at least acknowledged as valuable  
Beyond “all lives matter” and such.

Ideals used to give him the feels,  
His own personal Disneyland  
Where fantasy and history were potent prophecies,  
Not equally invalid lies.

But if you were to tell him right now  
“A dream is a wish your heart makes”  
He’d laugh then cut his chest in half  
To show nothing was there worth mentioning.

Held the power to expedite imagination  
Which wasn’t good for much  
Since you still had to wake up eventually  
And disconnect from false memories.

Miraculous coincidences abounded  
Whenever he felt like looking for them  
But he was usually too tired  
To tilt his head left and right.

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**"What Was the Name of the Movie?"**

*For Stephanie*

Two semi-novices elbow to elbow  
At the New Beverly Cinema  
Inspired by Clark Gable  
Not to give a damn about the rest of the audience.

What was the name of the movie?  
Haha, of course I remember  
But it didn't seem to matter then  
And it sure as hell doesn't matter now.

The weightless weight of your head on my chest  
Followed by the mapless route of our popcorn-salted lips  
Briefly convinced me that happiness  
Was the only truth in existence.

As we giggled our way to the street corner  
To call a 21st century carriage  
We were so lost in each other  
That we didn't expect to find our way out.

No one's lost forever though –  
A blessing and the worst of curses –  
Dooming our euphoric forgetfulness  
To become a sloppily detailed memory.

Yet if I cut out the start and the finish  
And keep the middle unedited  
I'm left with eternal proof  
Of temporary transcendence.