

Wilderness House Literary Review 21/3

Grant Vecera
Stupid Me

My friend gave me a cucumber from his garden.

The next day, when I opened the fridge,
I saw that my wife had eaten the cucumber.

"How was it?"

She looked up from her phone with that expression--
like something scratched away
from an obsolete love letter.

"Like a cucumber," she said,
sneered, to be truthful, then went back
to whatever.

The Meaning of Life

My cat sleeps on my lap.

His tail floats, lingers, floats.

His back paws point to the stars
or really just the ceiling--
which is more boring than a cloud--
as his nose burrows
into the crook of my elbow
and as a front paw stretches claws--
like an empty beach at sunset--
into the fat of my armpit.

His eyes open then close,
signaling that everything--
including all of the universes
of all of everything that ever could be
is just fine

as I type with one hand
and scratch behind his ears
with my other.

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Upkeep

A stainless-steel ice pick with a wooden handle.
It was so easy, I did all four.
Where it came from I dunno.
Sat in a drawer since before Doris bolted.

Thought about burying it out back,
but nah, take a deep breath, chill,
stick a porno in the blu-ray, and later,
shove a Lean Cuisine in the micro.

And then another. And I got Haggen Dazs.

Brats need to learn to respect boundaries.
It's not all about you, Henderson.

Freckle face Jacob on his Mongoose
blew right through our 4-way.

Some teen doosh texting,
like pimple-faced Todd Mckinsey,
would've squashed the brat.

And does anyone say thank you?

So yeah, I laid on my horn, and yeah,
I blew a fuse, I screamed at the shit,
said things a person should not say
even to smug, probably queer, Jacob.

And so there's mister perfect lawn Henderson
on my porch in his business casuals—
and who the fuck still sports loafers with tassels—
saying our Fox Trace Neighborhood Association

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will be made aware at next week's meeting.

What a dick!

Every Apple, Pear, and Apricot

Us oldsters love our rubbery red indoor
Walk-N-Jog track—the healthy heart of
our River Ripple Family Fun Community Center—
and we love it in spite of
Mr. Tummy-bulge Splotchy Geezer guy
always in his green, wet armpit Hawaiian shirt
speeding up each time I come around,
more than glad to take the outside—
more than glad to weave and cut
against the righteous consternation
of helmet hair Gladys and skin-n-bones Agnes
chattin' it up as they stroll like shoppers
glutting the produce section
so they can fondle every apple, pear, and apricot
as if no one else cares—
as if all this were all put here just for them.

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Speedway, Indiana, circa 1975

Eric lived in Eagledale, which was abstract to Mike and me, and so I don't recall ever wanting to visit him wherever the hell—but his sky-blue Stingray had a cool sissy bar and he could ride wheelies and was generous when we stole Snickers and red licorice from the QuikPik where that bug-eyed geezer told us again about Jesus as he rang it up—including the day, it being so hot, he gave us cold bottles of Faygo: orange for me, grape for Mike, and root beer for Eric.