

Ronald J. Pelias – Two Poems

Leaving

Leaving her there
in the care of a stranger, a nurse
who may or may not care,
in an unconscious state,
not knowing what she could know,
what she could hear, just hours
before she died

Leaving her there,
slipping away without a word,
without holding her hand
or bushing the hair away
from her unfamiliar face,
I face my mother's end
catering to my convenience

Leaving her there
I carry her with me, wanting
another chance, wanting
her to appear with a smile,
wanting forgiveness, absolution
for my act of neglect, wanting
her here

After the Flood

He cleared out the shed
after the flood. Mold
grew and he sprayed,
hoping, and waited
for everything to dry.

Mouse dropping appeared.
He set a sticky trap, placed
flat on the shelf, determined
to catch the critter. He wanted
order, all right for the eye.

Instead, a sparrow struggled,
stuck, its wings spread
like a fan, its head lifted,
grasped, fell as the hard
edge of his hoe ended the cry.

Ronald J. Pelias's work has appeared in a number of journals, including *Poetry East*, *Midwest Poetry Review*, *Coal City Review*, *Main Street Rag*, and *Negative Capability*. His most recent books, *Leaning: A Poetics of Personal Relations* (Left Coast Press), and *Performance: An Alphabet of Performative Writing* (Left Coast Press), *If the Truth Be Told* (Sense Publications) call upon the poetic as a research strategy.