

Goodnight, Earthman

By Claire and Oliver Smith

The rain hammers down in a primordial bombardment on her home, seeping in to dampen the lamplight dreams of the past winter's sun. She is compressed between these bricks where damp born spores bloomed into black life years ago.

It grew in splinters under her skin. She shivered as mycoid filaments perfected her transformation. She's cryogenically boxed in her own ice-dreams, they trap her in toxic wastelands. Beside her sits a memory who avoids her eyes for its own safety.

She became Memento Mori, praying to be placed in gardens of lace leafed plants with the roses' scents sweetening the oil-thick summer air. An emerald studded cat is crawling across the wood grain face of the fence.

She plucks his good luck and tucks it in her buttonhole-heart. Her reflection's peeling back its gas mask face; this time her unworldly flesh is made manifest in the mirror's silver tracery.

He's there, but not there with her in this void.
Alone in the black hole vortex, she's riding its waves through the house space.
Her star-ship in flight far out beyond the galaxy's edge.
She's plotting her trajectory through the stars of Saturday night tv.

She feels she must be a mushroom grown into the shape of the sofa, loving the metal-skinned Martians despite their evil intentions. She's turning Triffid, a nettle stingered space monster, she's joining the all-conquering race.

Breathing compressed Chlorine, an alien exploring earth for the first time. Wondering at the ways of a strange planet, she looks down at the warring natives at last giving up their obscure squabbles to die as the newly caustic air burns their lungs away.

She longs to rest in her saucer's berth. How she wishes she could return
To the stars where she lived free. She knows that from another world she's
fallen and is abandoned here with no option but to stay among the ashes she made.

Her kind were never destined to die in the heavens where they were born.