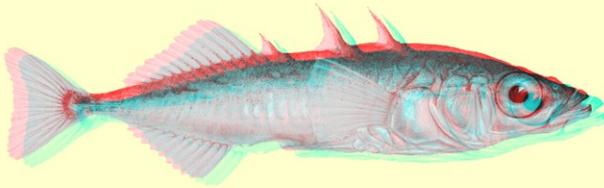




The Hedgehog Poetry Press

Stickleback



Stickleback

Kristin Garth

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£2
Where Sold

Stickleback XIII

Glitter & Guillotines

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School Supplies For Erasing Guys

Erase disgrace, rubber ice cream cone, pink
heart coupled names reduced to one alone.
Initials stickered, disappearing ink,
latest deceiver gone while you blinked. Grown

up addiction, school supplies, decorates
another, crushes, guys — sometimes females
(though never had to cut them out, mutate
a memory with scissors, pout, details

you cannot bear to see again.) Their heads
dissected, scalloped edge, from photographs
of those who'd leave you on a ledge, you wed,
divorced in diaries, colored pencil wrath.

Schoolgirlish ceremonies, grieving guys,
require scented markers, new school supplies.

Blacktop

You say blacktop midnight. Wear what we like:
fishnets, converse, the script rehearsed. Her name
is Babydoll, flashlight, pink bike, a slight
panhandle drawl, a tunnel chase, old game
you craved. Grade school reunion turned ribald,
depraved. Plaid ribbons, plaits in grownup hair,
no chaperones or underwear. Recalled
details, two decades old, remixed, brisk air,
curved concrete cold. Black diamond rip, you slip
inside. On gravel, she is sanctified,
transported to you young again — to lips
who whisper playgrounds to sullied minds.
She seeks vanquishment though she will run & hide.
She draws a map for you upon blue lines.

Rosemancy

Did he believe you were a bloom? Not rashed
abashed, adolescent doomed, entombed up-
stairs, crimson cheeked, viewed through cylinder glass
pistil pink — peeked pointillism amok
by candlelight, to pluck or pollinate,
demonic birthright. Did he see buried
thorns, subcutaneous, to liberate
like horns — erupting, furious, bleeds
the season mortality recedes? Did
he see himself in you, his powdered lip
a golden hue, amaretto, eyelids
half closed, pollen undertaste of tulip
tuberose? Swallowed demonology
a bedroom above adult gossiping —
a better medicine is blossoming.

The Ladies Are Waiting

near guillotines, acclaimed headsmen of means.
Duplicitous gleams eyeing you, their thighs
secretly tattooed, surnames, killers, kings,
state-sanctioned blowjobs, beheadings so why
not princess – even you? One bed, one head,
misstep, or two, detected, collected, stored
fine wine uncorked, with lords, midnight, rust, red
aroma, royal deficiencies poured
some stone-floored cellar, behind arched oak doors.
A happy ending may require cunning,
a crown to topple, rolling heads on floors
ideally yours. Best sacrifice is queen.
Appeasement is the strategy you take.
They're carnivores, and you serve them cake.



Kristin Garth is a Pushcart, Best of the Net & Rhysling nominated sonnet stalker. Her poetry has stalked magazines like *Glass*, *Yes*, *Five:2: One*, *Former Cactus*, *Occulum* & many more. She has six chapbooks including *Shakespeare for Sociopaths* (Hedgehog Poetry Press), *Pink Plastic House* (Maverick Duck Press), *Puritan U* (Rhythm & Bones Press March 2019), *The Legend of the Were Mer* (Thirty West Publishing House March 2019), *Candy Cigarette Womanchild Noir*, i(The Hedgehog Poetry Press), and she has a fantasy collaborative full length *A Victorian Dollhousing Ceremony* forthcoming in June (Rhythm & Bones Lit) and *Flutter: A Southern Gothic Fever Dream* (TwistiT Press) in January 2020.

Follow her on Twitter: (@lolaandjolie), and her website kristingarth.com

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