

a whisper among the fireworks: poems

kyrsten hodge

*this is a limited preview of the forthcoming chapbook
"a whisper among the fireworks" coming in the fall of 2024.*

in my memories, i remember that
i'm just how i always imagined i was
my body, confusing emptiness for nothingness
and my heart, confusing sympathy for empathy

but either way i'm going to feel something tonight
because i want to lay prone and powerless

and finally feel
and finally feel
and finally
feel —
finally.

i was eight years old
when i was forced
to discover my gag reflex.
this was before
he made me wear the dress
and fisted his granny's bra
with his dirty underwear.

this was before
he chomped down so hard
on the cartilage of my cock
that it snapped and
filled his frenzied mouth with
quivering droplets of blood.

this was before...
this was before..
this was befo

and i still have this scar
and i still have to tell this story
before someone can
truly love my body
and understand why
i disappear sometimes
and why i

stop

that's between you and god
and me and my ninja turtles
because what you did to me
i forced them to learn
smashing plastic bodies together
donatello wrestling raphael
leonardo pinning down
both bebop and rocksteady
and me confused
from figuring out why
their cowabunga sneers
suddenly felt so empty to me
and why their frozen faces betrayed
a pain that even
undressing april o'neil won't fix

goddamnit kyrsten, goddamn
purrs my imaginary girlfriend
who i just broke up with again
after the greatest
hate sex
we've ever had
and i honestly
have no idea why
my imaginary girlfriend
is so forgiving
my cute little cat girl
with glassy eyes
behind librarian glasses
her big breasts bouncing breastfully
she's kinda fucking intolerable
my beautiful, incredible, and exhausting
imaginary girlfriend

since i was there
an old fart was talking loudly
about caitlyn jenner
like i fucking cared.

"i probably wouldn't fuck that thing"

another time a mother
tugged her toddler away from me
while her tiny dog yapped loudly

man.

man, man.

man, man, man

man man, man.

and yes i celebrate
gay wrongs
and the right
to be forgotten
and yes i celebrate
your growth
and your right
to correct wrongs
and become
a better person
and yeah i guess
i can also tolerate
your need to be
fucking intolerable
if you can tolerate
my need
to serve cunt
and become
fucking ungovernable.

we need more
silly little bois
and big goons
and trans girls
obsessed with
tossing the shark

we need more
gummy bear butches
and transsexual tops
and squishy enbys
with date mates
carrying mushroom purses

we need more
dapper little mascs
with millennial
finger mustaches
and genderflux zucchinis
in checkerboard suspenders

and we need more queers
because we always need more queers

about

kyrsten is a queer woman of transgender experience
from west virginia. she works in a library, loves tacos,
and wants to be your friend.

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