

Girl Lost on the Prairie

On the last night I began to confuse myself
with the sky. The milky way filled
my eyes with spirit light, and the world
sank back, I lost its edges, the grass,
the rims and ridges I'd learned over the last
week by wandering, by finding again
the hill where I'd shed my muddy petticoat,
or the stream that had clean water
but quick skinny snakes, too, where I found them
when I drank the first day, where I was afraid
to drink on the second, where I drank and drank
again on the third, and then followed the water
back to that same mud hole, and the grass that looked
like other grass, but couldn't be possibly.
The problem was the prophetic dreams,
how they showed me the way back, so
I could never tell if I knew a spot because I had been
there or because I was meant to be.

That night the sky seemed to howl
at me, but it was the scavengers coming
closer. A coyote is a dog, almost.
It might be unexpected
comfort. I'd forgotten how to build a fire.
I was never the one
to do that work.

The sky was a carnivore mouth. It was gleaming
teeth wanting my meat. I wondered how it would happen:
my leaving, my way-finding or my every
fingerbone scattered, did it matter?
If there was no one to tell about
this huge salivating sky, these cries,
had they been there, had I?



ABOUT SARA FETHEROLF

Sara Fetherolf's work has been published in *Emrys Journal*, *Arsenic Lobster Poetry Journal*, *Room*, *Switched-on Gutenberg*, and *Gertrude Journal*. She recently received an MFA from Hunter College and teaches creative writing and composition classes there. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

HERON TREE

9 August 2015

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