

Kindra McDonald – Two Poems

Patriarch

The phone line sends the slurred speech
across the state and into my kitchen.
I hold my hello and hear my father
pop another top on a PBR.
After so many months of silence,
I ask what he wants *now*.

I want to tell you...
In the pause is hope
that there still might come an apology
for the years of school nights spent
searching bars for him.

Then finally, *You're going to be a big sister...*
My gut sick as he tells his tale
wanting to do the right thing, caring for this baby,
doing what's right.

I hurl the phone, scarring the soft, pale paint
of my first home. I scream to the empty room,
his drunken ears, the dial tone.

Now? Now you want to be a father?

The smashed phone is a curled fetus,
one red eye blinks up at me.

Fishing One Autumn

The river bank burns,
red and gold embers hiss
to their demise in the cool current.
A ripple, silver flash of scale--
brings up years ago begging
you to throw back the catch
because I couldn't watch
the flopping of their shiny bodies.

The line slack on the packed sand,

flesh twitching, overcome by air.
You laughing at my tears, let me toss
them in one by one.

A whole family returned
swimming in circles
holes in their lips
bubbles rising from their hook-
shaped hearts.

Kindra McDonald graduated from Virginia Wesleyan College and received her MFA in poetry from Queens University of Charlotte. She teaches Introduction to Poetry at The Muse Writers Center in Norfolk, VA and is cofounder and editor of Copaiba Press. Her work has appeared in various journals to include *Portfolio Weekly*, *The Quotable*, *New Fraktur Art Journal* and the anthology *The Nearest Poem*.