

Three Poems from *Blazing Star*



Blazing Star explores the healing modalities of plants and the liberatory possibilities of radical tenderness through a queer eco-poetics of care with and for the more-than-human world. The poems reimagine interspecies communication and nonhuman encounters through transcorporeal embodiments in thick time. Care blossoms into speculative permutations of the body and self through an exploration of trauma, healing, and the more-than-human relationships we are always already engaging in, visioning new possibilities for belonging, love and family.

PUSSYTOES

Antennaria neglecta

A webbing of string wrapped round fingers
 passed hand to hand body to body each
 thread whiskers to conclusion

tidy arrivals
 awaiting the next

when you see
 but can't say it yet read
 the signs early under hayed grass

I'm not sure what's coming but can feel
 promise in bone as pussytoes' baby q-tips
 stem out fuzzy plant paws

remember
 my own soft touch and get out the way

years of compost layers of
 dainty dresses and ghosts of former selves
 ready-made for good use laying
 new frame in less-traveled fields

IRONWEED

Vernonia baldwinii

You did it over and over again
walking tight circles into patterns
deep grooves into dirt
a cycle on repeat
until it broke creekside
polished stones
lapping up their own
in each repetition
a chance to break free
a permutation
that mothers a single body
spills
humble into tallgrass field
let it go
permission bare skin to imbibe afternoon sun
breathe into atrophied muscles and tired
limbs
select the seeds and give
us all a chance to see what flowers

OCOTILLO

Fouquieria splendens

What's said can
 singe and burn itself out
 ash nourishing
 soil for future growth
 anchored in shifting
 weather

I make way into streets
 into patches of green
 find portals
 in repeated refrains:
 dawn enters
 after night spring after winter
 every May peonies bloom sloppy pink

with each remnant given away:
 space for something new

what's made
 can be unmade what cannot hold
 was perhaps not meant to

from creation to survival and back again:
 flood song moon song singing liquid clear

Megan Kaminski is a poet and Professor of Creative Writing and Environmental Studies at the University of Kansas. She is the author of three books of poetry, most recently *Gentlewomen* (Noemi Press, 2020), and two artist's books – *Prairie Divination* (Sunseen Books, 2022), a book of illustrated essays and oracle deck; and *Quietly Between* (A Viewing Project, 2022), a co-authored collection of poetry and photography. Her place-based sound, poetry and art installations have appeared at museums, public gardens and libraries across the country, and her poetry and essays regularly appear in literary magazines and journals.

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