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December

Laura Read

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December

Abstract

I'm walking in the snow
past a house with Barbie's head
in the window. She is hairless
and forgotten behind a shade,
she's got a neck and shoulders
like the doll I used to have.

Keywords

poem, poetry, snow, winter, sick



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December 23, 2011

December

A Poem by Laura Read

I'm walking in the new snow
past a house with Barbie's head
in the window. She is hairless
and forgotten behind a shade,
she's got a neck and shoulders
like the doll I used to have.
I used to brush her gold hair
and curl it and do all the things
you can do with hair
before someone cuts it off.

She is watching me
with the eyes of cancer patients
waiting in the lobby.
My eyes are crushed with sleep
and the wanting to sleep,
my arms are curled
around the empty space on the sheet

where there are no more
infants swaddled
like those bald heads in scarves,
sleeping in the milk-light.

How long will she be forgotten there,
her eyes never shutting, her lids
dotted with glitter?
At least her breasts are not flesh,
don't know about milk,
or the end of it,
all those mineral veins
going quiet in the chest,
or the slabs of metal that press
each one flat to take pictures
of what's inside, white masses hidden,
the snow that hasn't fallen yet.

Laura Read has published poems in a variety of journals, most recently in *Rattle*, *The Mississippi Review*, and *The Bellingham Review*. Her chapbook, *The Chewbacca on Hollywood Boulevard Reminds Me of You*, was the 2010 winner of the *Floating Bridge Chapbook Award*, and her collection, *Instructions for My Mother's Funeral*, was the 2011 winner of the *AWP Donald Hall Prize for Poetry* and will be published next year by the University of Pittsburgh Press.

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