

Spring 5-1-2014

Warrior

Megan Thornsbury
College of DuPage

Follow this and additional works at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr>

Recommended Citation

Thornsbury, Megan (2014) "Warrior," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 36: No. 2, Article 74.
Available at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol36/iss2/74>

This Selection is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at DigitalCommons@COD. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Prairie Light Review by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@COD. For more information, please contact koteles@cod.edu.

The memory presents itself in the form of a blackened, three dimensional cube; I know this to be the room. In this cube a metaphorical spotlight illuminates the naked body lying on the floor. A pair of rugged paws hoists the legs into the air. I did not know those hands, I resented the way they felt. I spent years coaxing confessions from my mother to give these hands a face. The face belongs to a family friend who had been entrusted with my care.

I remember a road trip with my grandmother, and I remember rocking my hips and grinding my bits on a book wedged between my thighs. At the time of this trip I would have been around three years old. I transformed the carefree games of childhood into sexually explicit romps—"playing house" became a game of "bad man" where I role-played bondage and rape scenes, the Barbies occupying my doll house constantly naked and contorted into awkward sexual positions. The least concealed of my memories are those of physical abuse. The phrase, "Quit yer' cryin' before I give you somethin' to cry about" induces a full body rigor, a guttural jitter, and an acid that festers beyond my throat. I remember a thick wooden paddle, the attitude adjuster. My step-father drilled holes through the center to increase the efficiency of its swing, and eventually, duct tape held it together. After duct tape failed to maintain the paddle it was discarded, but surviving it were the leather belts, spatulas, hairbrushes, palms, fists, or any object within my step-father's reach. Sometimes, I catch a glance of myself bent over a bed, my pants settled at my ankles. Around the time I entered fourth grade my mother remarried. I was shuttled from my hometown to a military town in Kentucky. After a year, on a family visit to Southern Illinois my brave baby sister exposed the lewd behavior of our step-father. The marriage was abruptly dissolved and while my step-father was away on field training for the United States Army, mom retrieved our belongings in a hasty middle-of-the-night mission. The details I recall about Kentucky include: sleeping with a crocheted cross under my pillow, a night-light to ease my onset of fearing the dark, the Christian radio program "Unshackled" that lulled me to sleep at night, and the verses of Psalms I tearfully chanted at night. Throughout my life, I have come to be thankful for the empty craters in my mind. Statistics methodically predict the future of my productivity as a victim of childhood abuse, but I do not listen. I am not a victim. I am a survivor; every day I am surviving. I believe that I am a one woman rebellion, every day that I am surviving I am rebelling against the crimes committed on my body, and I am rejecting their potential power to ever define my future. I believe I am strong enough to remember, but I deserve to forget.