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## The Novel

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*College of DuPage*

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# The Novel

## Barbara Armbruster

I eat a book  
with canine ferocity,  
tearing at the chapters,  
gulping convulsively  
with the hunger of it,  
gnawing close to the bone,  
growling deep in the throat  
at all who come near.

When the fever is upon me,  
I find a secret place  
for my guilty assignation  
and hold the pages close  
even if dinner burst---  
the fire goes out---  
the relentless ringing  
might be an emergency.

I give myself over  
to the spell of the storyteller,  
ripping my bodice to the waist  
and muttering huskily, Take me,  
knowing this is an obsession,  
knowing that there is no cure,  
knowing the madness will pass to my kin  
as long as best sellers endure.