



A Little Feral

Maria Giesbrecht

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A playful collection, Maria Giesbrecht's *A Little Feral* invokes her religious background.

Born in Mexico and of Mennonite ancestry, Giesbrecht found release in writing: "A safe / rebellion. A poem. / It's the way I have survived." Herein, God and her violent, alcoholic father, with whom she has a love-hate relationship, appear as authorities whose joint power has waned: "Some days I want to crawl / into my throat and scrape out / all the hymns I sang / in reverence to a God / my father custom built / for me."

The book's metaphorical matrix is a sly blend of the material with the supernatural. Clothing, decor, food, and music are frequent points of reference ("the sun hangs grey and washed / like an old comforter / on a grandmother's clothesline"), but faith is always apt to pop up, too. A key pastime is described as "writing poems about flirting with God (which is really just living — there's no difference)."

With a tongue-in-cheek tone, the book ponders the value of breaking the rules when settling on a personal identity. A borrowed Sylvia Plath line connects to the observance of sad-girl tropes on Instagram, while alliteration and slant and internal rhymes result in enduring sonic appeal.

Through sensual vocabulary and sibilance, the poems of *A Little Feral* capture a bittersweet, resonant religious upbringing.

REBECCA FOSTER (May / June 2026)

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