



Each Luminous Thing

Stacie Cassarino

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Care, from *carry*: as happens mysteriously in utero; from what was once her single-selfed existence, the poet assumes the burdens of maternity—a *carrier*'s nine-month *care* package that stretches into motherhood and beyond. In *Each Luminous Thing*, Stacie Cassarino's three daughters serve as her "sources of luminosity," a stellar second act to her Lamda Literary Award-winning debut, *Zero at Bone*.

Love Poem to August

*I'm not sure if dusk falls
or rises when I look up
from watering the garden
towards my daughter's cry
inside the house. Outside,
bats looping in circles
that want to be seen, so nearly
striking every dimming object:
lamppost, lilac, elm, roofline,
face of the pregnant woman
watering the garden. If I were
to lose track of time, walk
walk until I forgot I was needed,
would that make me less necessary?*

*The body carries its weight
forward, unsteady. Pines blacken
against the blue-edged ledge
of this lonely evening
in which I am only a mother,
a mother only
until all goes quiet. Inside,
two forms beginning
to resemble daughters, already
learning to breathe. Outside,
the sky lowers its floating stars.
One body leans against another.
What I can still identify
hangs heavy then splits:
more than one thing in the dark—*

*creaturely, impatient—
waits for me.*

MATT SUTHERLAND (November / December 2023)

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