

She Used to Be on a Milk Carton

Kailey Tedesco

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The arrival of a new poet doesn't cause stars to wobble or birds to fall from trees—as far as we know—but heads do turn and the inevitable sizing up begins immediately. Kailey Tedesco, help yourself to a glass of bubbly, you are welcome here. Indeed, you'll live in this place up with your kinetic enthusiasm and volubility. With an MFA in creative writing from Arcadia University, where she graduated with honors, Tedesco's work has appeared in *Boston Poetry Magazine*, *Rust + Moth*, *Broadkill Review*, *Quail Bell Magazine*, and many other publications. She lives in Pennsylvania.

God in Real Life

accepts my collect calls & man, do I gab!

Phone-coils wrapped around prayer hands, I ask
Do horrible things have thoughts before they happen?

Do they yell "Stop, you people!" & try to arrange
everyone back in their assigned seats?

God showed up in the form of a chick I wanted to hold.
The chick grew a beak with teeth & they pecked my hand to shreds

that reminded me of pet bedding in a cage. I felt guilty
in that moment for all the hamsters I ever forgot to feed.

Everyone yelled kill it! & I almost wanted to —
one snap & it'd be lint dirtying the floor.

But I let us both cry out, because wasn't it me
who wanted to hold the creature to begin with?

MATT SUTHERLAND (Religion 2018)

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