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Five Little Dresses

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Five Little Dresses

Sara Anne Hook

Never thought I would get rid of them.
Loved them so much.
Three with the black panel at the bottom as a hem.
Abstract prints, one black and white, one red and black.
Most favorite, muted colors of the desert,
striped like a Native American blanket.
A basic black, always in style.
The form-fitting one in green and blue
that even showed a bit of décolletage.
Paired with a fake pearl necklace and cardigan.
Sheath dresses can be so forgiving,
until they're not.

Suddenly, they had to go.
No more half-starving myself
to be a perfect size 6
or 8 or 10 (forget about it).
Whole years of my life,
when I don't remember eating.
When your mother wears a size 2
you are always too fat,
no matter how thin you get.

Gently, put them in a bag,
five lovely dresses, still on their hangers.
Donated to charity,
along with 25 pairs of pantyhose.
Only one store carried the brand I liked,
stocked up when I could.
No more stretching them out, like exercise bands,
and wrestling them up until my arms were tired.
Then finding a run in them
after a day of meetings.

The last vestiges of my career,
now off to new homes.
Free – to be a different me.
Sometimes you need to give up what you love,
when it no longer serves.
At least, I kept a label.