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Grocery shopping

Patricia Thrushart

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Patricia Thrushart has published three books, *Little Girl against the Wall* (Quimby, Pickford & Cheshire Publishers, 2009), *Yin and Yang* (Quimby, Pickford & Cheshire Publishers, 2017), and *Sanctity: Poems from Northern Appalachia* (Quimby, Pickford & Cheshire Publishers, 2020). Her work appears regularly in the *Watershed Journal*, a regional literary magazine of Northwestern Pennsylvania, and on the websites Dark Horse Appalachia and North/South Appalachia. Her poems have been published in *Tiny Seed*, Clarion University's *Tobeco*, the *Avocet*, *Still Point Arts Quarterly*, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Feminine Collective*, *Curating Alexandria*, *High Shelf Press*, and included in the *Northern Appalachia Review*. Her first historical nonfiction book, *Cursed: The Story of Marion Alsobrook Stahlman*, will be published in October 2021 by Adelaide Books.

Grocery shopping

Mask on, I learn
how much I rely on
the lower half of my face
to make amends —
my cart in the way of the flour,
my long pause in front of the tuna,
going the wrong way.
Gone is the smile that says:
I'm friendly! I'm sorry!
I wear a covering below my eyes
behind fogged glasses that don't emote
the way glossy lips would.

I'm instantly inscrutable,
suspected of hoarding flour,
being too choosy about tuna
and snooty too—
with a high-end car
that opens the trunk
when I wave my foot below the latch.

Groceries in the trunk,
I go home to the only ones
who now see
the intimacy
of my naked mouth.

Masked

I start sewing on Passion Friday,
the silver needle piercing
a bolt of black cotton
woven tight, tripled,
cut and
tucked
to shroud the nose, the mouth;
bound with ties
to draw the fabric close,
like a winding-sheet.

I sew, the needle like a thorn,
the fabric bunching and smoothing
under the glare of machine light,
the hum of bobbin and thread,
taking tiny stitches
until the mask is done.

I put it on the face
I shouldn't touch,
hiding the sorrow
I know it shows.