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All Mistakes Were Once New

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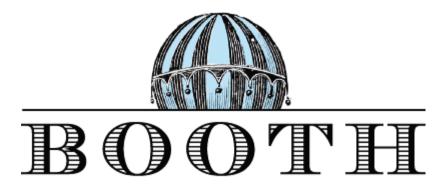
Abstract

There is always someone who has done unspeakable things to a child, an animal, a room or tent or cave or car of them.

To be insatiable isn't to be unbreakable. You can mistake damage for passion, the heel of a hand slammed into a wheel for pride, a glass ashtray heaved at an iron radiator for pluck or verve...

Cover Page Footnote

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All Mistakes Were Once New

by Leslie Adrienne Miller

There is always someone who has done unspeakable things to a child, an animal, a room or tent or cave or car of them. To be insatiable isn't to be unbreakable. You can mistake damage for passion, the heel of a hand slammed into a wheel for pride, a glass ashtray heaved at an iron radiator for pluck or verve. Rage that just keeps coming might look like a fear you're keen to quell, like a body open only to you, its expanse of yeasts and oils entering the mind like a field, furrow and tussock, a teaming wreck of dry clods furred with curled grasses and open above to anything that can fly.

If you live long enough, you think you can escape that dazzling expanse,

maybe outrun shame while you're at it, arrive somewhere quiet and wild with a companion who wants nothing of you but to share the fire. But watch someone you love pass from this life, and you'll see the flaw: shame takes us all the way to the door, and those who love us most are a misery of maneuvering, even as they mop our brows and bury their noses in our hair. They want us happy the only way they know, which is to say they carry us by clump and crumble into futures we can't share, and make of us the vistas they hoped for all along.

Leslie Adrienne Miller's collections of poetry include *Y*, *The Resurrection Trade*, and *Eat Quite Everything You See* from Graywolf Press, as well as *Yesterday Had a Man In It, Ungodliness*, and *Staying Up For Love* from CMU Press. Professor of English at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota, she holds degrees in writing and literature from the Iowa Writers Workshop and the University of Houston. Her website is http://lesliemillerpoet.com/.