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In Praise of Small Miseries

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In Praise of Small Miseries

by Sheri Reda



About the Author

Sheri Reda is a writer, educator, and performer who serves as Executive Director of Flow and Moment, LLC, and as a librarian with Wilmette Public Library. Her most recent publications include stories published in the anthologies *Storytellers True Stories About Love*, *Storytellers Stage to Page*, and *The Healers Burden*. Her poetry chapbook entitled “Stubborn” was published by Lulu Publishing as a Locofo Chap. In addition to certifications in celebrancy, spiritual direction and mediation, Sheri holds an M.A. in Modern Letters, an M.A. in Religions, and an MLIS. She is a member of the Chicago Conservation Corps.

In Praise of Small Miseries

Sheri Reda

On lowland plains in Sierra Leone, the tsetse
and its taste for marauders' cattle
once and again protected the clans
from Mandinka invaders
and Malian imperialists.

At South Central, in West Virginia, an inmate
night after day after night sliced his palms
to fashion an escape with dental floss
a three-inch hacksaw
and a small battery
to kill the electric fence
and would have been be a hero to all of us in captivity
if not for the other
bigger things he'd done.

In Abruzzo, a monumental Pontone Beech
continues to weather
wood-boring, bark, and long-horned beetles
weevils, aphids, geometrid moths
beech bark disease
water mold and tinder fungi
mildew
ozone molecules
and the felling of its young
and stands there for centuries
growing as it falls apart:

A small but mighty thing, to live on.