Baby Sitting

Laura Jensen

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BABY SITTING

The hen has slipped the paper dolls into her nest. We have left the lawn because of notes the parents left. We have watered the rows of flowers whiffing greedily of the dirt. Later, in their lighted room, I tell their story of a dune buggy on the moon. The older girl grins, for she remembers.

There is the steel moon now, in wounded vanity because they have pierced her ear. She has been their gypsy, she has been their pirate; she, in that, has not lost track of the terrible oceans of waves.

Is it that she sulks? Bone-brain, pock-face, what did you expect to see with your white eye? She expected cloves and loves, combs of black, of lavender; after all, for years she has let us play in her shining hair.

They played horse on the piano stool. It crouches moony on its claws, on the flattest piece of ground, a shrouded pony. I shake the cloth from the saddle. Behind I see a delinquent snarl of hair in the wilting hydrangea.
The girl is watching the moon.
It is shaped like what moves slowly—
her roof, her net
for the constant sky.