

KARIN GOTTSHALL

Lesson

At some location between the rod itself
and the hook, which, having shot straight
on its filament through the locust-sung
summer air (all sun-blistered
and clover-hung), at the flick
of her cousin's right wrist until it reached
the soft crease of her inner elbow, where
it snagged and he laughed (she cried out)—
that tender purchase of dart in flesh
allowing him to reel her bleating back
along a taut line of rancid animal pain
she couldn't unfasten from—at some
point along that axis humming casual
violence (and his boy heat and her blood
just beginning to bubble under the barb),
a false idea she had about this world
and her position in it was corrected.