Spring 2011

The Name of the Game Was Monster

Bridget Bell
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We played it like tag on our bunk beds. The well water was sulfur and rotten eggs.

One girl: the monster.

Spiders congregated on webs we brushed away with the backs of bare hands.

She picked top or bottom bunk.

Our white trash neighbors spit phlegm-wads on the dock.

On the other bunk, the others huddled.

At the local party store, he bought a Milky Way. The candy covered in a glob of maggots.

She tried to tag us with outstretched limbs.

The dock balanced on water-filled barrels. A steel ladder, slick with neon green algae.

We screamed.
I didn’t jump out far enough. My thighs smacked against the splintered boards.

We scurried from her hands and feet.

Crumpled in a wheelbarrow, full of whiskey, they pushed her along the edge of the road.

She yelled *switch*.

They buried a stray cat up to its neck, used a lawnmower.

We dropped to the bottom.

Wild ash embers spit from split trees, burnt quick holes in our blankets.

She climbed to the top.

Plastic beach chairs with shaky aluminum legs collapsed, folded up around you.

If she tagged you, you became the monster.