



★ **Lonely Women Make Good Lovers**

Keetje Kuipers

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It's not easy being Keetje—so truthstakingly, heartgapingly, cliffedgingly vulnerable and live. The experience of her poetry feels dangerous, capable of triggering changes both lasting and longed for. That she recognizes love as “defined not by what we / cannot know of the world but what we cannot know of ourselves,” is as telling as anything you can know about her. The author of four collections of poetry, her work has appeared in more than one hundred magazines. She lives in Missoula, Montana.

I wasn't trying to steal her boyfriend

and he wasn't her boyfriend anyway. Just someone
beautiful she'd slept with once. I hadn't yet

learned the difference between a shadow cast
in the shape of my desire and a contract a body

makes with its own hunger. But I'd known beauty—
its currency, its power. So I wanted to sleep

with him, too. How I went about it wasn't
that remarkable. I simply made myself appear

to be a thing he'd want: not me, but something
I could easily be mistaken for, like a bird, say,

pretending to be another bird. What I
craved from him was harder to cage. Beautiful,

beautiful, I'd heard people praised all my life.
Not the bird at all—just the flutter that it raised.

MATT SUTHERLAND (March / April 2025)

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