

Kinky One

My brother boxes school bus shadows,
keeps me from the point
of the in-and-out elbow.

I ask mum to bring home a straight comb:
I could uncurl myself,
the kinky one.

Gone tender-tipped, yet dug-in
like an echidna disturbed —
only spikes showing — a big boy
emerges, nights, to forage verandah dark
for the milkman's promise, steals
lacy glimpses, learns to love to watch.

The grown man, thick-skinned,
dreams such puzzles as
having his spleen removed.

My dog works a raw-hide bone
day in, day out,
hoping to loosen the knot.

Dennis R McDermott

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