

**jennifer, your skin is soft**

jennifer, your skin is soft

your hair  
so unlike my own  
tangles and curves  
of the deepest crimson ground  
brushes my face  
and i let it

my mouth  
reaches your breast  
your hands grip my shoulders  
tighten  
as if to hold this minute  
in a cell  
(one of yours)

i'd forgotten how  
to love a friend  
to let my tongue  
spell enchanted words  
i can't repeat

jennifer, your skin is soft  
would you let me lie

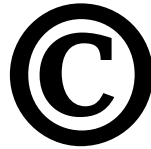
here with you  
until this song is over  
jennifer jennifer

would you let me lie

## A Small Garlic Press

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Mere Smith 1996

Mere Smith, originally from Houston, Texas, relocated from one southern hell to another during the Age of Divorce in the early 80's. Growing up in a tiny town in Florida, she escaped conservative persecution (and the constant 90 degree temperature) by working at the local theatre. Twenty shows later, during the Era of Matriculation, she moved to her current residence in Providence, Rhode Island, where she is majoring in theatre at Brown University.

She has been writing poetry since the age of 10 and has been published in a number of literary magazines and several places on the WWW.

Her chapbook, *naked in my mirror*, is available from A Small Garlic Press.  
\$2 + \$1 postage.

## 5 Poems by Mere Smith

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### **you see this braid**

this braid in my hair  
is for you i made it  
special just so you could  
unwind it

if you weren't so far  
away i would let you  
yank it a couple times  
not enough to really hurt but

i've got enough hair  
for both of us, honey,  
just you and me and  
we'll lock ourselves in

and my hair will grow  
and grow around your hands  
until we look like a  
sculpture

you see this braid i made it  
specially for you



## twenty years of kim

she shifts her finger stones  
around the building  
sucking up dirt like  
it was gold trimmed her breath  
hummed from the timing of it all

sixteen times had crept up  
and bitten her hard heart-  
strings came all undone and  
she was a limp puppet rusting

nosing and nestling her way  
around the corners she spit out  
the taste and feel of her  
rubbed her own back until nothing  
was left of her

she bent and bent  
and bent  
but never could  
get it  
straight

## spring break of my junior year in college

i worked forty hours  
at the record store  
to get the bursar off my back

i offered to feed my  
friend down the hall  
's fish  
he was in paris  
that year  
while i laid out cds and cassettes  
and raffi videos to frazzled mothers

someday  
i told myself  
when i'm poor and famous  
i'll get to paris  
looking distinctly american  
no black turtlenecks for me, thanks  
i'll wear my jeans with the  
doonesbury patch on them  
and smoke american cigarettes  
and refuse to address the waiters  
in french  
just to piss them off

and when i take my spring break  
from my junior year of college

i may be forty or fifty or retiring  
but i won't listen to any edith piaf  
and i won't leave behind

any damn fish to feed.

## to the ladies in the lingerie department

put those cotton grandma  
underpanties back in your dusty  
1898 closet

i'm out  
from under the counter now  
and romping through your  
wonderbras as though i  
tasted greek blood on my teeth

fold your glasses  
into your little breast  
pockets and sit back

because ladies,  
if it ain't black and lacy  
and bad and hard to strap on

i'll burn this  
sears  
down.

