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Michael Anne

Marti Miles

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I should have been just Michael.
But the x's overpowered the y's;
my chromosomes forced me
into somebody else.
Still, with the name they gave me,
I received letters from the Boy Scouts,
Army recruitment information,
a request from the ATO's asking me to rush.

Stories were told of my parents at a costume party,
Mother's obstetrician dressed as a pregnant woman,
drinking martinis doubled,
when I, like a salmon attempting that upstream swim,
floundered in my mother's waters,
prepared for the spawning,
opened her floodgate,
demanded that Dr. Martini sober up.
Father shared his light blue rimmed cigars.

I arrived safely,
ten fingers, ten toes,
all body parts except one,
the one father wanted so long.
It would have been nice to be able to stand
but one part's missing;
that part would have opened a world for me,
another world, not the one I've known,
the bridge from one generation to another,
the key to unlock my father, and then my mother.

She put no bows in my hair that was never braided.
My socks, a plain white,
never any lace, anywhere.
I pined for my friends' frilly pastel dresses;
my own, like sailor suits,
were the red, white and blue of the Navy,
with those ties,
always with those ties.

My name is Anne.
Anne.
Anne.
They could have called me by my name. Anne.
Even Annie or Annette. For God's sake, even Anne-drogynous
They never called me Anne.
I flounder, sit on the bottom;
I wonder why they bothered.
I wonder why I'm Anne.
I wonder who I am.

Marti Miles

Michael Anne