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A Method

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A Method

Johnna Ingram

there's a method to your madness,
to the way in which you choose to survive.
this way of survival that
upon close inspection
is crystal clear.
you just wanted the pain to disappear.
there's a method to your care,
to the way in which you choose to love.
this way of love that your parents taught
with rags of gasoline and apology beers
at the ripe age of 13.
You appear on my doorstep one day,
these methods of yours tucked in your back pocket.
You call me a "Little Mowgli"
and ruffle my hair.



You take my mom to bed
and dream if you dare.
And some days we hit the road.
me in the backseat high on laughter,
the car leaving tire doughnuts in the lawn.
some days we con catfish,
your hands steadying the line
and guiding the knife we use to flay our catches.
You smell of gasoline,
cigarettes and beer,
but you're my new father.
I'm so glad you're here.
But some days you don't come home
and Mom yells and slashes your tires
with the knife we held together
some days you do come home,
and the method you're using to survive
is crystal clear.
You smell of gasoline,
cigarettes and beer.
you aren't my father anymore
but I don't want to let you go.
back then I still had hope.
One day you never come home,
having found a new mom and little Mowgli
to call your own.
today you're not a father
not a son, not a brother –
not someone crying out for help,
for a way to make it all better.
You are "local man":
a career offender behind bars,
32 years on meth charges.
The decision, the judge said, was crystal clear.

Argiope Aurantia Daphne Babcock