
**DESI DI NARDO**

**My Little Brother**

I never told you that I was afraid of the other children  
When they boxed you in and shouted *Four eyes*  
And sneered and scoffed until you cried  
I saw you lick the blood off the side of your mouth  
Turning into the wall of the school yard  
When desperation flooded your eyes  
Picked on, taunted, and mocked for being humble  
You looked at me like I might have been your mother  
You prayed for me to be  
But I was only two years older  
And pretending to be something else  
Shame on you for the expectation  
I could have knocked you out for hoping  
But when you followed me into my room that night  
I let you play with Ken  
I played Barbie  
And we went to the drive-in a plastic, red convertible  
You played with my hair while I drove  
Nobody mentioned anything  
Besides it was only schoolyard talk anyway

Desi Di Nardo is a novelist in Toronto. Her writing has appeared in numerous literary journals. Previously, she worked as an on-air television host and taught English in college.