

Isabelle Correa, author of *Sex Is from Mars but I Love You from Venus*, returns with her second Poetry collection *Good Girl and Other Yearnings*. Correa's book is blunt and honest, showing how someone can live through pain and still want something beautiful in life. Divided into five sections, the collection moves through memories of childhood abuse, sexual assault, mental illness, and healing. Each section starts with a quote from another writer, setting the tone for what will follow. Correa's poems cover hard topics, but also hold reflection, humor, and hope.

One of the most effective things Correa does is write about painful subjects with careful rhythm. In her poem "The Rape," she uses short, broken lines to make readers feel how scattered someone's memory can be after traumatic events:

"Nightmares can boil you
slowly like falling asleep

in the sun." (40).

This short, rough rhythm reflects on how the mind staggers through confusion and fear. The white space between lines becomes part of the story, showing that silence is something heavy. The poem doesn't over explain the events—simply showing how hard it is to name what happened.

In a different tone, "Exposure Therapy for Overwhelming Feelings of Guilt and Shame" uses dark humor in the face of pain. Correa writes:

"Text a whole
army
of simps
a picture
of the stem
of a pink balloon
& tell them
it's your nipple" (52).

This section shows a prime example of society's fixation of turning women's bodies into a joke. By comparing a woman's nipple to the stem of a pink balloon, Correa displays how she herself is making jokes about women's bodies since it's so normalized in today's society, bringing light to the internalized misogyny and lack of self respect she harbors. Women are sometimes seen as objects, and in this poem, she is comparing a body part to an object. The quick pace and shorter lines makes the poem feel like a nervous laugh to cover some deeper feeling.

Correa's word choice is also very vivid. In "Dear Isabelle: a Letter to my Pen Name," she writes "I understand / —it is hard to writhe and wail when you're a woman / and everyone is watching" (33). This captures how hard it is to express emotion in a world that expects women to stay composed, but also how women are stereotyped as sensitive, so if she did act out people wouldn't take her seriously. This poem is a thank you to her pen name, for giving her the freedom to speak freely and protect parts of herself simultaneously.

Correa also takes a crack at form in creative ways. Her two poems "I Wrote This Poem on Company Time" and "Poem in Which I Circle Back", are written on Google Sheets. The poems use the boxes and columns to visually frame the words, using her digital workspace into art. This unordinary form shows how art can exist in the middle of everyday work, and how creativity and exhaustion from the mundane overlap. The second poem "circles back" to the first, connecting the act of writing to work and emotional growth.

Correa's writing also mixes pain with humor. In "Moby Dick as All My Rage" (page 39), she writes, "My uterus a picnic, a download, a topic in an old man's /mouth like ice." This line is funny, yet angry, pointing out how women's bodies are treated as public property. This poem shows anger doesn't have to always be destruction. Sometimes it's clarity—a way of viewing the world honestly.

What makes *Good Girl and Other Yearnings* powerful is the fact that it's not a simple book. Correa writes about trauma, recovery, and being honest and creative. Her poems contain pain and humor, showing a realistic side to how healing is rarely every straightforward. These poems not only ask us to witness suffering, but also see how survival itself can be an act of art.