

## Hair on Fire

Remember the time we wanted to juice up your parents' campfire and tossed on some lighter fluid? There is no sound in the world like the whoosh of ignition inches from your face. We scattered like bunnies. And your mom told us we might have set our hair on fire. We liked the idea of our hair on fire, and we made up details about how our scalps would have melted, and then our eyeballs, and then our faces would have slid down off the bones and we'd have to become marsh monsters.

We reminded each other of that when we were on that nature walk in the bog later, and we got to giggling, and you stepped off the path and your foot sucked into the mud. I stepped off too so we'd match.

Remember when we lit all those Fourth of July worms on the sidewalk in front of our houses, and they left black smudges on the concrete, and we told my brother the smudges were from gunshots? That was funny then. He used to pester us so.

You were always the smart one, the beautiful one, the one who got elected to this and chosen for that. You got into the better university. You snagged the better husband, better neighborhood, better social events.

But me, I'm a good criminal attorney. I am. I can find a mitigating circumstance every time. It helps that everyone likes you; I mean the jury does. I wish you'd found some other way to do it, though. I'd wish you'd shot him somewhere other than the back. And I wish you hadn't known about the affair as long as you did. It substantiates the prosecutor's claim of pre-meditation. But juries are fickle, and you are beautiful.

I'm still stepping off the path into the muck for you.

The jury is about to deliver the verdict; we need to go back inside now.

I'm afraid your hair is on fire.

Epiphany Ferrell's writing career includes gigs at *Coonhound* magazine, a couple of newspapers and a university communications team. Her stories appear in the *Potomac*, *Corvus Review*, *Clamor 2015*, *Cooper Street*, *PaperTape Magazine*, *Prairie Wolf Press Review*, *DarkFire*, *Seven Hills Review*, *Helix Literary Magazine* and other places. She makes her home with dogs, cats, chickens and horses -- and a couple of important people at Resurrection Mule Farm in Southern Illinois.