

THE CURIOSITIES

BRITTANY PERHAM

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Series Editor, Jon Thompson

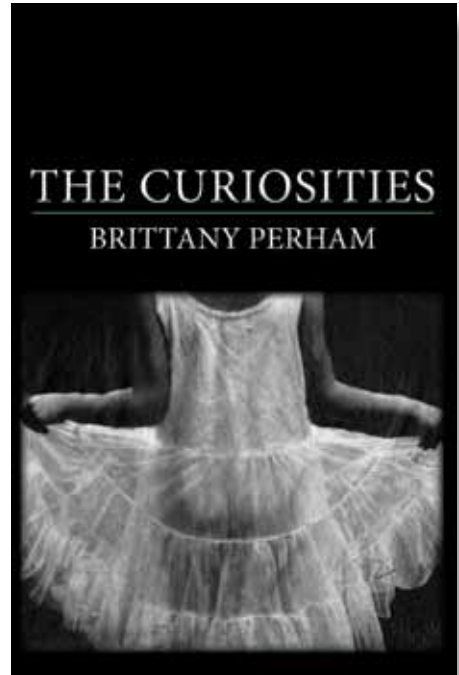
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AUS) © 2012 by Parlor Press. 72 pages.

Brittany Perham's first collection, *THE CURIOSITIES*, fixes its sure and unsettling gaze on daughters and fathers, sisters and brothers, madness, sickness, longing and love. These poems make up a cabinet of curiosities because they hold what is fascinating or frightening, beautiful or awesome—a "stomach plumed by syringe," a "zoo's lost leopard," a "forest of high-waisted trees"—up to the eye. In their image-making, the poems place language itself beneath the glass slide of a microscope in order to discern its component structures, its natural patterns. Curiosity here is a way of looking—unsatisfiable, looping back on itself, yielding only further questions. In these uncanny and passionate poems our own lives are made strange to us, and we are wonderstruck.

The poems in *THE CURIOSITIES* make a powerful system, almost an atmosphere out of stories of the body and memories of place. In poem after poem, the speaker is mysterious but never remote; the language is deliberate but never staged. And at all times, the music, intensity and craft of the work bring us close. This is a wonderful debut collection. —Eavan Bolan

BRITTANY PERHAM is a Jones Lecturer in Poetry at Stanford University, where she was a Wallace Stegner Fellow from 2009-2011. Her work may be found in the *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Drunken Boat*, *Lo-Ball*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *TriQuarterly*, and elsewhere. She lives in San Francisco.



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