

# The Milk House

Rural Writing Collective

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## I Confess and Other Poems by Kari Gunter-Seymour

Kari Gunter-Seymour

### I Confess

I've resorted to murder,  
here in my kitchen  
filled with basil, bee balm  
and thronging castes of blue-black crawlies—

insular troops, tiny mighty, committed  
to a crisscross of skewed geography,  
my countertop the pinnacle  
of misguided missions.

No matter how often we skirmished—  
vinegar, garlic, ginger root,  
hot pepper sauce strategically smeared,  
they marched, an endless cadence, bodies  
immune to TikTok's tender of panaceas.

Thus, my about-face  
to warning labels, skull and crossbones,  
the safety-sealed containers,  
their catalog of wards and palladia.

Afterwards, past the gnarled pyre  
of exoskeletons, I became  
a Steinbeck character—struggling and sullen,  
too broken by my own hand  
to conjure a defense.

What humans cannot tame, they terrorize,  
forgetting and forgetting and forgetting,  
when we bring in the cold,  
darkness follows.