

## Mary Beth Hines – Two Poems

### Before School With Mother

My fierce Irish mother  
sits behind me  
zealously combing  
the rat's nest out of my hair.  
I brace myself  
for the old-fashioned braids.

This is her gift to me –  
morning after morning.  
And I receive it stoically  
waiting for the goodbye kiss  
to brush the tip  
of my nose.

### Truth or Dare on the Bass River Bridge

Grace chooses the dare—  
shuts her eyes and leaps  
from the bridge.

Arms wide, she bows,  
careens through air.  
Her red heart skips  
and drops.

Above, the boys whistle  
and roar. She surfaces  
to see them plummet  
one-by-one.

Then she turns and dives  
deep into the river where  
the watery landscape undulates,  
and she slides behind a wall  
of swaying weeds and waits  
for a handsome  
and unsuspecting admirer.

**Mary Beth Hines** lives and writes from her home outside of Boston. Her work has appeared in journals such as *Crab Orchard Review*, *Eclectica*, *Muddy River Poetry Review*, *Nixes Mate Review*, and *River Heron Review* among others.