

War Makes You an Animal

Sarah Katz

The best way to explain it is that the war makes you an animal.

—Nidzara Ahmetasevic to Sebastian Junger in *Tribe* (2018)

She says animal as if
it's some kind of freedom
to be all survival instinct.
You, a lumbering thing,
a bear, maybe, sharp teeth,
all love for your cubs.
She says animal as if
the peppered moth must fade
from predatory imagination.
The whale must mourn
her only calf for weeks
through the sea. This instinct
to survive being hunted
and pursued—it's to sing.

Sarah Katz's debut poetry collection, *Country of Glass*, is forthcoming from Gallaudet University Press in spring 2022. Her poems have appeared in *District Lit*, the *So to Speak* blog, *Rogue Agent*, *MiPOesias*, *The Shallow Ends*, and *Bear Review*, among others. She has contributed essays and articles to a variety of publications, including *The Atlantic*, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Rumpus*, *Slate*, and others. She lives in Fairfax, Virginia, with her husband.