

Trust is a Tick

By Scott T. Hutchison

Trust has altered herself with excess, she's become engorged— a dark-legged tick, filled to bursting after long-feeding at the blood trough of steady-pumping veins.

Her narrow mouth could release—but it loves the stabbing kiss, the future of her children nurtured in the lifeblood image of parasitic advancement, siphoning other essences.

Depletion means: find another. And another. Palp and pulp alert her to the potential of additional hosts. Brain and abdominal cord intertwine: heart and gut operating as one. Her hardened dorsal shield shifts as her stout body gives way, its colorless thin skin stretched to scars.

But Trust herself is victimized by greedy diseases driving through the streams: with bullseye rashness, bold invasions of red cells and white, with the infections of already-compromised prey. Miniscule stormings of defenses attack and stroke fever-rivers into lymph nodes, toss grenades into the joints, spread dysfunction down to the kidneys. We are naturally

disgusted by what she has become. But we are fowl-perplexed—standing still in the courtyard, as nature's turkeys and guinea hens noisily gambol forward to supposedly help us, clucking and clacking, hungry for the slow, the fat, the infinite bounty.

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