My Books

by Bill Yarrow

My books wound you. They wound me
too. They are those undullable knives
they sell on TV, shards of glass you can
pick up only with gloves to which are glued
shards of glass. They are a rain of pins,
a bed short sheeted and stuffed with nettles,
a nylon backpack of burrs. All the pinches
Prospero inflicted on soft Caliban. All the false
promises he made to resilient Ariel. In the
middle of the night, I hear them groan. They
are torturing each other. They use their spines
as swords. What do they want? What does
torture ever want? Screaming information.
Quick, toss your books. The milk has turned.

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