

When the Music Ends
Lynne Schmidt

I knew from the first time you touched me
we were not made to last
but that didn't mean
I didn't plan on savoring you in my mouth
on my skin
for as long as possible.

I knew that some day
the fabric that has us clinging together
would go through too many washes
too many fresh start, start overs,
and let's be honest
I watched a lanyard turn to ash
after months in direct sunlight.

So I held your hand that night in the dark
I kissed you in front of your friend
and you kissed back
like he wasn't there at all.

I asked you to dance with me
because all along
I knew the song was going to end.

Lynne Schmidt is the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor, and a mental health professional with a focus in trauma and healing. She is the winner of the 2020 New Women's Voices Contest for her collection, *Dead Dog Poems* (forthcoming from Finishing Line Press). She is the author of *Gravity* (Nightingale and Sparrow Press) which was listed as one of the 17 Best Breakup Books to Read in 2020, and *On Becoming a Role Model* (Thirty West), which was featured on The Wardrobe's Best Dressed for PTSD Awareness Week. In 2012 she started the project, AbortionChat, which aims to lessen the stigma around abortion. When given the choice, Lynne prefers the company of her three dogs and one cat to humans.