

MEREDITH MALTBY

Jackal

Lil Pro drives a Honda Civic. Lil Pro is the queen bee.

Lil Pro worked at the Wildlife Preserve until she was caught rolling spliffs in the forest. After that, Lil Pro created an e-card startup company. The first card she ever made featured a broken blue jay, its wings clipped at the quick.

Lil Pro once got it into her head that she wanted to be a writer. The first story she ever wrote she called “Jackal.” It was about her experience in the eighth grade spelling bee when she misspelled the beast, dubbed it “jackel.” She got one word right: “altruism.” Lil Pro reflects on the profound and whimsical underlying nature of her young self to this day.

Lil Pro will never like people as much as animals, only the truly hurt, aged, and sick ones.

Lil Pro misses her old job. Lil Pro does not want to hear any of your shit.

Lil Pro is working her charm on you to later partake in your wallet. (The brown leather is screaming out your back pocket.) Her secret talent: the whistle. Birdsong. Lil Pro will not let you go.

Lil Pro has it out for the bad ones. Lil Pro sniffs it out like a fox to a weak, dying animal.

Lil Pro once stuck quarters in a man’s eyeballs and socked them like a punch card. He said Lil Pro owed him fifty more cents for her purchase. Lil Pro does not endure trifles.

Lil Pro has a personal vendetta against you. Lil Pro is slipping blood thinners into your morning coffee.

Lil Pro is taking the thing to your neck.

Before you can even see what it is, Lil Pro has it hooked around you. Lil Pro is working up a sheen on her meaty throat.

Lil Pro once hated you, but now she permits you to live.

Lil Pro will leave you here, for now.

Lil Pro thinks that not all bad people are truly bad, but she likes the round smoothness and tranquility of a quarter before she double-smashes it into the wicked.

Lil Pro's favorite animal is the mourning dove.

Meredith Maltby is from Chicago, IL. She was a featured poet at Design Cloud Chicago's HERE/NOW event. Meredith has previously published her work in *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Vending Machine Press*, and *The Fanzine*, among others.