

The background of the entire cover is a deep black, overlaid with intricate, organic patterns of golden-yellow and light brown. These patterns resemble natural stone or marble, with thin, branching veins and larger, more diffuse patches of color. The overall effect is one of luxury and depth, with the light reflecting off the veins to create a subtle shimmer.

TERESA SARGEANT

# GOLDEN JOINERY

**Poetizer** | Publishing





Printed by Poetizer Publishing, 2024

[www.poetizer.com](http://www.poetizer.com)

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## **A crash in a certain lane**

Do we have to revisit  
    my childhood photos?  
The photos I took  
before  
I had braces?  
Knew that hair products existed?  
Discovered good makeup  
    and good application skills?

Do we have to revisit  
    my yearbook photos?  
A time marked by  
schoolmates  
bullying me for my  
jagged teeth,  
frizzy hair,  
and awkwardness?

Do we have to revisit  
    my family photos?  
The photos I took  
with my physically present  
yet  
emotionally absent father?

Photos of me  
in my childhood home  
where I grew up as  
an  
only  
child,  
the  
only  
resident in my world  
and of this world?

Do we have to revisit  
those photos —  
no, because I am a destroyer.  
They are but shreds of gloss.

But where was the  
gloss  
in the memories?



## **demonized for being**

growing up,  
I got d e m o n i z e d  
for being  
“slow on the uptake,”  
so to speak

for being  
not fast enough  
to understand  
what I was supposed  
to understand  
in the classroom,  
of classmates,  
of relatives,  
of strangers

I got demonized  
for being  
“different,”  
for not being  
“pretty enough,”  
“interesting enough,”  
“good enough,”  
“loud enough”

I got demonized  
for being  
me

