



**Wild Life** by Kathy Fish  
Matter Press

Copyright 2011

65 pages

ISBN 978 0 9837928 0 2

\$ 9.95

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

*Review by Susan Tepper*

To enter into Kathy Fish's "*Wild Life*" (a collection of undomesticated flash fictions) is to step into a zone where reality and dream overlap as naturally as the clouds and the sun. This stunning collection has been divided in two sections: Wild and Life. They are equally exhilarating. Fish has this uncanny ability to grasp what is beyond the obvious and present it in a prose style that's clean and clear. Just when the reader thinks everything is understood, that's when the dream folds in, deftly, almost invisibly, and we are transported.

The collection opens with a short flash titled "Watermelon" where a girl is addressing her brother through memory: "*It was like the time we broke icicles dripping from the low eaves and brandished them, slashing and sparkling, and you cut my cheek and dropped your weapon.*" Despite the violent portrayal, it's a love song from sister to brother, with the pain of their ultimate separation running through like a red thread. In "Foundling" a couple finds a cast-off baby: "*They discovered the baby in the grass, under the frantic cotton sheets.*" In a few short frantic lines their lives change, and just when you think all is hell, it changes back. "One Purple Finch" is a story so full of yearning it brought tears to this reader's eyes. But don't let the tears mislead you. Kathy Fish is not a sentimental writer. She writes from her heart and her head, in equal portions. I most highly recommend this excellent collection of stories.