



# Bangs

*Amye Archer*

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## **Bangs** Amye Archer

The best writers understand the value of revision—how personal history gets filtered can make or break your integrity to the reader. It's a navigated line between self-indulgence and self-immolation. Amye's poetry is disarmingly honest, confessing a discovery of poetry in Aqua Net, spandex, and MTV glamour boys—or more to the point—the small town boys who take their cue from them. Bangs isn't a love letter to the Big 80s as much as it is adjusting the rearview mirror. Amye reminds us time and again in the poem "Bangs" that it's not who we take home, it's what we take to heart that keeps us up at night. ~ Jim Warner, Quiddity Literary Journal

Life in Bangs is measured in Aqua Net and stonewashed jeans, as Amye Archer, a rebel girl riding in a car filled with boys, carves out our eyeballs with the sharp knife of girlhood's memory. Fumbling over her lifetime like a first kiss, she wraps us in "Poster Boys" like Axl Rose, Jon Bon Jovi, and Bret Michaels, and we can feel her father ripping those posters off the walls of our body. Bangs takes us back to the days when hairspray and high bangs weren't just cool—they were required by all the girls tapping out the beat with their feet, flicking ash on the ground at a packed concert hall they broke into. Archer's writing is full of beautiful contrasts: edgy and soft, angsty and free. Bangs will always have a place on my shelf for its brutal, heartbreaking, yet fun and youthful honesty. ~ Loren Kleinman, The Dark Cave Between my Ribs

Readers of a certain x-shaped generation will pop this mixtape of a collection into their Sony Walkman and hear Amye Archer sing to us the soundtrack of a life from girlhood to motherhood. In BANGS, Archer conjures the spandex-panted, heavy eye-lined stylings of the big-haired 80s, as they happened to a girl who struggled to live and love in a gritty northeastern Pennsylvania town. Archer's work stings with resonance and reminder, both of our personal crises (divorce; the death of a school friend, pain of infertility, the fear embedded in motherhood) and those public crises that have marked our time—the first Gulf War, 9/11, the Sandyhook elementary massacre. This book is a power ballad to a time and a place, to a girl who grew into a mother and put away the Aqua Net, who hasn't "worn eyeliner since Bon Jovi's New Jersey," but who I bet—I hope—still knows which button to push on the jukebox. ~ Sheila Squillante, Beautiful Nerve (and one-time-owner of Def Leppard's Pyromania on vinyl)

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