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Poetry

*"Painting is poetry that is seen rather than felt,
and poetry is painting that is felt rather than seen."*

- Leonardo da Vinci

[Sara Holbrook](#)[Joshua Lepard](#)[Ashley Otero](#)[Gabriella Sizemore](#)[Quinton Callihan](#)[Tim Combes](#)[Melissa Uhran](#)[Katelyn Moore](#)[Noah Bruce](#)

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Body-Broken Female

By: Sarah Holbrook

Dear body-broken female that hangs her head at the base of her bathroom sink. Today you will eat a single meal. Just cover all the bases. A delicious turkey sandwich with sweet pickles and onion just like when you were little. But wait, body-broken female that waivers above the loaf of bread, do you need that? Cover most of the bases. Just grab a clementine.

Oh no, body-broken female, grab that magazine instead. Remember how her silhouette casts such a tiny shadow. Remember how a lady should always look her best. Body-broken female that pulls at her loose arm fat, you can do better than this.

Sweat is meant to drip, continue working. 5 miles and hardly woozy as you pass triple your calorie intake. Good job body-broken female, continue working. Another hour passes, and you can call it a night. Tell your phone to play your favorite song, position yourself into a butterfly stretch, watch as women strut by with toned legs and a deep tan. Oh body-broken female, ignore the hunger pains, keep stretching, keep hydrated. How much longer until you're attractive?

Dear body-broken female, it's arrived: swimsuit season. Your little sister tugs at your wrist. She wishes to get to the pool early, before the rush. Pack the sunscreen, sunglasses, but certainly not the suit, not today. By the way, we can see the hairband you snap around your wrist when your stomach burns. Body-broken female that camps out in the shade, it's too obvious. Try your best to avoid looking at thinner women, draped in expensive swimwear.

Please notice, body-broken female, there is a figure standing beside the pool that looks just like you. She waivers, standing, staring in the pools reflection. Look closer as sun rays seamlessly melt over her complexion. Body-broken female, how unfair the world finds it that you decompose in self-hatred as life passes you by.

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Joshua Lepard

Epsom Salt in the Bathtub

Epsom salt in the bathtub,
Luke, the boy and the warmth,
Keeps mountain peak knee caps
Jutting above cumulous water levels,
Raisin fingers missing fingernails tapping the top
Creating rings expanding,
Soap bars fondled in circles of palms,
Bubbles spread over burnt knuckles,
Locks of hair fall out every day, and
Wet hair is the worst feeling on a dry nape,
Twisted towel collar to keep from feeling it,
Or I could just say,
"He took a bath and went to bed."

Rations

Two cups caffeine pre-ten a.m.
Wake up later one is fine, then jump straight to something stronger
Hit a bowl, save half for later.
Twenty minutes to work equates more than a half gallon of gasoline and two cigarettes.
Used to taking half dozen smoke breaks every shift. That was then.
New restaurant, new coworkers, new city, new management. One smoke break per week if I'm
lucky. I'm actually lucky, despite my habit, if
I don't ask for any breaks in the week.
Bar next to work coerces us with light after midnight.
Bar next to work coaxes our tiny wills into the building. We stay overnight.
It costs exactly seventeen dollars and fifty cents to loosen the lips and the inhibitions and forget
about the job next door, not including tip, which if you don't tip you shouldn't be here.
Back home, twenty minutes away, it costs exactly twenty-two fifty, not including tip.
Rather walk next door and save a few bucks to spend on just one more.
A dozen cigarettes at the bar if not more.
Save one for the twenty minute ride home. Another half gallon of gasoline to get me home.
Maybe one more cigarette for the ride to the gas station in the morning to buy more cigarettes.
Finish the bowl. Gotta remember to eat,
first meal of the day is right before bed.
Wake up before ten a.m. feeling something awful, chug caffeine and gatorade.
Hit the bowl, if it's a weekend I have every excuse written down on why I deserve to start early.
It's only Thursday, but I'm off at four,
close enough.
Line it up and count, two options;
Fast foot, mellow miles
I've got all day, and I don't want to fiend, so
might as well make it last a while.
Too quick and I'm sick of feeling this way, wanting
more than I have.
Bo's on his way, he's bringing more.
I check past midnight again,
count out two cigarettes,
find a way home.
No one around. I guess I'm driving with one eye closed.
I spent twenty-two fifty plus seven dollars for cigs plus two-seventeen for one gallon of gasoline
plus forty for the flame and mids are cheap so I don't count that, but if I did it'd come to about
ten. The total amount costs more than I have to spend, though with overdraft protection
I'm covered
till then.

Chef's Special

Dresses described not by their appearance
rather the name of their maker, as if
Vera Wang is the goddess of clothing, but
her clothing is nothing covering a vessel to
advertise the Vera name, as if the chef
tastes better than the food they prepare, and
when an actress stands to speak she is asked what
she is wearing rather than what she thinks, and
she doesn't say the material or the color, but
the name of the designer as if that's all that matters.
The ritz don't give a shit, that's why
when you go to a nice
restaurant always order the chef's
special, they put themself in every dish and
always want to get rid of it quick.
I've never heard anyone tell me a carpenter's name
of the chair I sit in, though maybe they should
tell someone since Harrington thought of what
Cumming created, still
Crapper shit in it.

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Ashley Otero

Momma this is me

Momma this is me
I am not the person you think I am
I am attracted to women in a way so beautiful
I see the best in people momma
I'm trying to change for you
But momma it's not working
I just want to be free momma
I just want to be me momma
Don't you see momma
I've lived so scared to fly as if my wings were cut and my soul can't escape
As much as I try I can't move momma
You don't like gays momma
So I say I'm bi momma
Yet I still see the shame momma
I take it back because I want to be your perfect child momma
You are happy again to find out your child actually is "normal" again
Momma I'm hurt
I feel equivalent to dirt momma
It's all a phase you say
Little do you know that everyday I pray not to be this way momma
I feel ashamed momma

Now I've turned over a new leaf momma
I've decided to live for me momma
I hope one day you can see me as more than a phase
But as your daughter who tried not to be gay

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Colors

By: Gabriella Sizemore

I became tearful at the sundown changing the color of the sky.
I watched it take small strokes against the canvas in order to strike away its idiosyncrasy.
I wanted to hide behind it in hopes that it would fool everyone into thinking that was my beauty.
The bright rays of yellow would make me shine too much.
The rueful reds would make me forget myself in a mixture of peacefulness and self-forgiveness.
The oranges would make me noticed in the way I feel entitled to.
I watched the sun disappear, making sure to leave no trace behind.
It always made me feel better at the end of the day.
I walked away to leave my blues behind, keeping my greens in my hip pocket.
If I saw the sun this way, then perhaps any type of insignificant thing can be seen as magnificent.
I could be magnificent.

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Quinton Callihan

3 AM

You were the music in my soul;
The breath in my lungs;
And the calm to my inner storm.
But now that you're gone;
My soul is silent;
My lungs are empty;
And my inner storm rages with a fiery passion.

Parental Ignorance

Talking to my parents about my depression is like screaming into an empty Amphitheatre;
My voice echoing off of the stone pillars;
Crashing into the open air in a cacophony of empty noise.
When I tell them I'm tired because I'm sad, it seems that what they hear is more along the lines of:
"I'm tired because I'm lazy"
When I ask them to search with me to find some help, they tell me that the only help anyone can provide, is a small white pill that will keep me trapped inside my own mind;
I explain to them that I don't want medication, I just want someone to talk to;
And they tell me that they wish I would talk to them more;
But when I tell them my mind paints a portrait of emptiness;
Or when I tell them the voice in the back of my head tells me to put the cold metal that I am clutching to my heart against the smooth underside of my left arm and pull, the frown;
I am shocked when they tell me that if I go outside and feel the sun on my body, the sadness will turn to joy and the darkness that fills my soul will be replaced with the glow of the outside world;
At this point, I realize that it is better to suffer in my bed;
With the comfort of silence to fill the saddened voice that I have created;
To erase the empty feeling that has been left there by the blissful ignorance of the ones I call MOM and DAD.

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Tim Combes

From Ashes

The ocean swallows her ashes and my legs
as flashes of pancakes, syrup,
eggs (that were only good because I cracked them)
float up over my eyes
like the suds around my waist.

Her only great grandchild clings to my side.
Little brown feet barely break the surface
like his knowledge of this woman he'll never know

He came from below.
A child of warm rain and roaring thunder.
An offering from under the crust,
Where crashing plates ripped the earth upward,
cracking concrete.

She was the ocean's daughter.
From the day she dragged her drunken mother
out from it's belly,
it bore and rebirthed her.
Called her it's own.

The tide pulls her back now,
Into the heart of her mother.
Daughter of sea gone away.
Son of earth in my arms.

Across the Table

Our eyes meet
Brief
Across the table.

I still want you.

My tongue
Is a battering ram
For the words behind my teeth.

I. Still. Want. You.

It's written
All [I] over my
Body.

Forbidden [Still] ink
Blots: Obvious,
[Want]
Or so
[You]
I thought.

But when you pack your things I just say,

I STILL WANT YOU

"Bye."

Violent Shots

A violent shot that struck the womb: the start.
Electric pulse – bum BUM, bum BUM – began.
Her tiny fist wrapped tight around my heart.
I blinked my eyes and then she up and ran
through adolescence (barbies, bruises, boys).
I begged her, "knock it off. I can't keep up."
She giggled, kissed my cheek, and killed the noise
that filled my brain: she overflowed my cup.
To think this beauty came from such a night
a backseat love I'd otherwise regret.
The LORD saw fit to bring from blackness light-
this bow-haired babe He won't let me forget.

For violent starts have violent ends they say.
I never thought she'd leave on such a day.

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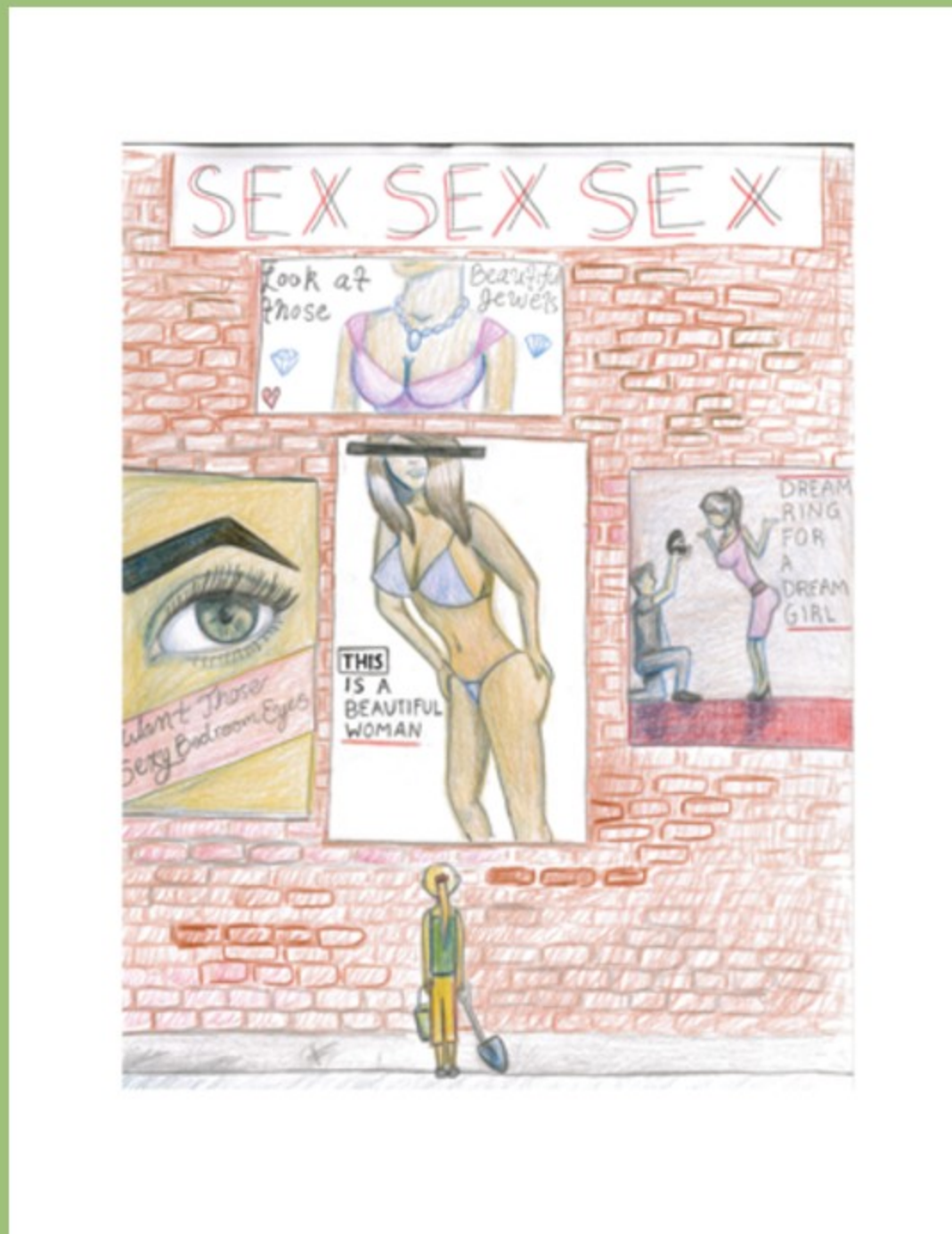
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Media Messaging of Body Standards

By: Melissa Uhran



Adolescent prancing,
Wild locks of hair and crashing laughter,
Dreams of love in her eyes,
Running, tripping, and rolling in the earth.
No care for appearance,
Allowed for the fur to grow on her legs and under her arms.
Her natural beauty was pure, special, and unscathed,
A priceless diamond before
Imprisonment.

It was destroyed and consumed,
By harsh light.
World view engulfed her,
In lush fair skin and plump breasts.
The voices screamed for sculpted curves,
Luscious lips, and doll-like eyes.
The images that broke her,
Were unscarred, unmarked, yet un-living.
Everywhere she ran to escape,
Though it was too late.
The unloving spectators,
Watched as poison injected itself,
Through film, literature, and art in the street.
All for valuable papers,
Crinkling in their pockets.

Lust for individuality faded,
To lust for beauty.
Eyes glistened,
Glossed over with indifference.
Cries in the peak of night,
Of wonder and confusion,
as they lost themselves.
The poison was relentless,
Night and day.
Maybe Man could wisp away,
In her arms show her truth.

From curled position,
Lost her form of identity.
Alas he was poisoned as well,
With sexual desire in his eyes.
He pursued only to pray upon,
The images' influence burned.

Mother, sister, and friend,
Witness and subject of drowning,
In blushed features.
Hastily keeping up,
With the perky grins,
Expected to win diamonds on finger.
False ideas created by themselves.

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Katelyn Moore

Skin

Your skin is soft, but not
It's rough, there is hair
I hate when people call skin smooth.
It is not smooth, it is rough.
There are pores & wrinkles
You are human, your skin reflects it.
Perfect imperfections make you up.
Your skin is not smooth.
You are not smooth.
I am not smooth.
But I touch you
And you sand my rough edges
If only for a second.

Coffee

My hands smell like coffee
Someone dies today
All I can think about is;
I spilled my coffee,
Those two girls laughed at me.
Someone fucking killed people today.
All I can think about is that damn coffee.
How privileged I am,
That every time I've gone to a concert
I got to leave alive.

Anxiety

Anxiety bubbling under the surface, ready to boil over
Anxiety to anger in seconds
Exploding up and over

Red cheeks, heavy breathing
Can't catch my breath, constant heaving
Relief is far and farther still

Further down I tumble
My own despair consumes me
The thunder that is my thoughts rumbles, grumbles

Sleep eludes me
Thoughts consume me
Sleep comes but comes too late

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I'm Not Him

By: Noah Bruce

I gave you all of my time,
All of my attention,
All of my love
And yet,
You went back to Him
I'm not Him

I was always compared to Him
"He always took me places"
"He always bought me things"
But,
I'm not Him

I am me
I am strong
I am independent
That doesn't matter because
I'm not Him

I will never be Him
I'm okay with that
Are you?

He was your first love
I know you'll never forget Him -
All of the great things he did
But,
It seems like you have forgotten the terrible
things
The screaming in the car
Cheating on you
Blaming you for everything
Faking things for attention

I never did any of that
It doesn't matter though
Why?

I am not Him

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