

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: PMDD POEMS

Ava Serra, Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, 2025

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In a complete embrace of bodily horror and excess, this collection invaginates readers within premenstrual dysphoria disorder (PMDD) and the larger biome of menstrual disorder. *PMDD Poems* accounts for the ongoing marginalization of menstruating bodies while synthesizing current research on the disorder. Simultaneously, the collection juxtaposes malady with salubrious gender identity, validating non-binary identity and portraying it as euphoric epiphany, a systemic casualty, and an anchoring solace. The baroque explorations in the collection navigate this intersectional niche with the body positioned as adversary, victim, companion, confinement, and corpse.

PMDD POEMS

by

Ava Serra

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Professor Lillian-Yvonne Bertram, Chair  
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## Artist Statement

The menstrual landscape core to this project is maximalist in bodily horror and excess, baroque conceits and tenors, and malady. The setting is plain gross. The setting often maintains an unsettling distance from hyperbole. In other words: it is every bit as disordered as my experiences with menstruation.

My work here fixates on interactions between a menstruating body, non-binary identity, and capitalist hetero-/cis-patriarchy. Simultaneously, it affords occasional space for cross-genre intertextuality and abuse survival confessionalism. My menagerie of identities and experiences informs my work in its attempts to subvert and contradict stereotype, social othering, and traditional structures.

Conversing with the likes of Mina Loy, Leila Chatti, Akwaeke Emezi, and Monica Youn, this work continues demystifying menstrual disorder. There are intersecting echoes of Loy and Emezi's unapologetic staunchness, Youn's experimentation with form, and Emezi and Chatti's approach to the subject. A distinct unabashed voice testifies on experiences—actual and hypothetical—that arise when a non-binary person in a menstruating body encounters threats to and loss of bodily autonomy. Ultimately, the poems make unequivocal one of the few established scientific theories of Pre-Menstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)—the turmoil of treatment and “management.”

This project has evolved and now informs my other projects and technical experimentation. Physiological ruminations have spurred an interest in “fitness/exercise poetics,” which interrogates the Protestant work ethic, late-stage capitalism, and the impacts of fitness rhetoric. I reopen examinations of closed forms and the creative opportunities they offer, such as the pantoum acting as a vessel for trauma. Dialoguing with female-bodied writers of the past and

present, I rebuke the United States' tacit notion that presumes of the country, its people, and its institutions a general, progressive mindset regarding menstruation and gender in the context of a menstruating body. Through survival confessionism, I'm redressing my relationship with and celebrating Boricua culture.

These initiatives include other confrontations with hegemonic manifestations—both external to and perpetuated within myself. In tandem, the University of Maryland's MFA program has equipped me with an abundance of technical and literary knowledge. This knowledge emboldens me to continue the aforementioned work while exploring daily various aspects of writing craft. Moreover, these technical forays unveil novel paths to the nasty and gruesome within this harrowing project.

## Acknowledgements

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*Arkana*—“Elective Hysterectomy, with Complete Notes”

*Jelly Bucket*—“Baby Diner Blood Rent,” “Internal Ultrasound on a PMDD Patient,”

“This Is Not a Conversation About My Body”

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As my pussy bleeds, I play Fleetwood Mac

Stevie Nicks crescendos in tantivy time  
during my ruddy landslide

ritual: I piss tissue & quarter-sized clots  
onto a folded moon cup

that's reluctant to dive where it'll drown.  
I bleed like I breathe in this water

closet, rock along to nausea's metronome.  
Stevie rasps against my monthly urges—

I want to return this bathroom to an operating room  
with the dull knives lodged in my labia like ingrown hairs.

I spiral in  $\frac{2}{4}$  time. Slick with my excretion, the moon cup hails  
from my wrinkled fingers. The silicone mollusk infects the toilet

water. It and I are both stained with pearlescent  
fertility. Gushing, womb-eclipsed, I weep

into the porcelain crescent, grate an apology to every witch  
chant that mothered me through mourning November moons.

The bowl burgeons overabundant: me-meat, loosened  
dream-teeth, sanguine eel, necrotizing glitter, boar

tusks—my pussy drums on. I'm fading out  
as my phone speaker thrums. The music's

gold dust woman scoops up the moon  
bell and surrounds this cell like triage.

She double-dog dares me: don't slip  
a death omen up and through my hexed hell-slice

into my leaking—my pussy  
sputters chunks. I cramp forward

until I'm face-first with the waste, the weight, the red  
Sick. I am so dawn-craven, mud-taken—

the bathroom's motion-sensitive lights douse.  
Stevie rings her bird bell outside this narrowing

chamber. More waste. The landslide craves  
its foul offering. A waning witch sister. I grate

an apology. Fleetwood Mac shifts  
to *The Chain* and Stevie exhausts her belt.

This chamber is grave-  
quiet as I plunge into the drumbeat,

my pussy's damp  
timbre, its caterwauling.

Under the mud, the music fades.  
I skewer a clotted, caustic pearl.

## Bitter Pill

*You'll only want to die*  
*four times a year*, the doctor  
offers, handcuffed to the cyanide  
pharmacy. The system's

preferences: estrogenic armamentarium against  
the affliction—catamenia catastrophe  
catalyst like a transorbital ice pick  
or a too-tight straitjacket.

Whatever keeps my womb open  
for rent—for the lowest price!—  
no matter how many times a year  
my malaise site yens for a steamroller. *It's funny,*

the system-harried physician recites,  
*you can almost spell benign from birth*  
*control*. No laughs from me, the lifelong child-  
averse lesbian. *Odds are*

*it'll be fine*, the doctor delivers to  
a deadpan. *It'll keep the dying*  
*away, with minimal side effects—except*  
*for those few times a year.*

I said I'd rather not  
at the appointment's advent.  
The system then & the system now  
state & state & state, *Don't knock it 'til you try it.*

My young body & I are perched  
on the exam table's crinkly paper. On the off-  
chance this elixir decays into arsenic,  
we are an inexpensive funeral.

We are clenched, frigid, ready to spread  
these legs for reaping. The doc goes  
to their computer. The system slurps up its favorite  
names & numbers from the clacking keyboard.

Hissing, my body heralds oncoming boars.  
The script is writ.  
Cyanide pharmacy: open for business.  
Customers with deeper pockets than mine

& shallower spirals are waiting.

    This site of my supple womb,  
plump & pulsing piggy  
    pink with marketable fertility stays

splayed like a thick cash stack, spread  
    wide for ice picks, porcine tusks.

## Soundscape: For-Profit Medicine

The leading announcement at my first and last  
Pharmaceutical Company lunch: *Why would we make a  
Cure when we make more money off a temporary fix?*

your veteran uncle his lungs wheeze  
waiting on the phone on hold  
with the sixteenth Company representative.

an eighteen-year-old's glucose dam cracks  
detonating from rampant insulin rationing because of a brand  
spanking new \$300 price tag.

The marker's sharp squeak as the lab manager, the rodent  
Colony's angel of death, prowls through testing lab hall-  
Ways distributing murder marks.

elders growl by the millions in the crosshairs of the Sackler family  
business Purdue pushing peddling over-  
prescribing until those bipeds break  
down into sabretooth opioid aberrations—rabid feral megafauna.

the stop and s t u t t e r respiring of my slumbering  
narcolepsy diagnosis too costly for me to wake too expensive  
to keep an enigmatic bedfellow any longer.

Blade-slap-judder from the personal helicopter  
AbbVie's CEO takes from Trump Tower to work  
Everyday—

Hear the *fwip fwip* of fat cash stacks from private research  
Slapping Americans as they overpay for overprescribed  
“Fixes”—

the slow set of cement Synthes shots into the spines of anesthetized  
mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, siblings—

all Norian Corporation deemed wasted breath—those families  
simply inexpensive, unsuspecting skeletons.

Thirteen thousand computer clicks as Americans submit  
Insurance claims two seconds too  
Late. In Jersey, Sir Andrew Witty hunches over his in-  
Ground pool, grits his veneers, and beats his meat

Like an understimulated rhesus monkey  
Fresh out of the laboratory's pillory; breathless as any other  
Primate in the lab, he jerks it to the beat of *Toxic*  
By Britney Spears, wheezing to man-made climax—

gurgles and gargles as a cyst chokes and chokes my right ovary  
unimpeded because the anesthesia alone cost \$2000  
and insurance won't cough up a dime for anything that falls  
under their umbrella of "elective procedures."

Minnesota: epoxy glue dries crackling  
adhering seatbelt to chest on a boy who speeds splashes sinks  
into a lake because he couldn't get a month of Lexapro—  
couldn't afford his \$20 lifeline

From a Company that reaped in one year  
Over \$6 billion in profit.

## Cemetery: Employee of the Month

Workplace Policy:  
come blood lose it in there—  
maggot-infested bathroom

the other keepers  
call the egg cycle *kindred*  
*nature* like any man

inside a femme mold:  
me their exotic pussy-  
cat—a fickle lynx

battered puma sexy  
liger the lab's colony  
test subjects shriek ultrasonic

sick? The Boss snakes in  
sniffing about the lab like  
An Accusation

plunge into the cold  
cows' hearts cached for carnivores  
exiled in the frost yard

The Boss scours steel  
rooms so eager to bury  
leaky whistleblowers

crammed with viscera—i  
was terminal from the start:  
Workplace Policy

rats scamper & enter  
my shed stench i'm puking  
menstrual & i can't go home

Workplace Policy:  
Three absences Three Strikes you're  
Out caged like lab mice

Offenses include  
flulike symptoms vomiting  
g.i. butchery tick tick tick

in an emergency  
room with pipes bursting mouse-trapped  
no rat can retreat

## Letter Drafts to My Gynecologist

1.

Dear Glinda O pussy witch  
Origami expert of fallopian  
tissue Maiden  
attendant of endangered shrines—

this pink, glittering bubble is shrinking  
blink-quick from good witch  
magic—gold coins stuffed  
in my ears' cinema sepia shells—shrinking

into Houdini's ruptured appendix, a poppy field  
head injury—not a one-way ticket to Oz.

2.

Dear Glinda We agreed:  
seldom can anyone predict  
an updraft's wet mayhem or the anvils  
from a convection cell. You can forecast it

no more than you can pinpoint where a cyclone  
will fling itself and a farmhouse it uproots  
once a storm's gone rogue. No amount of tulle  
clouds can transfigure a witch into an omniscient narrator.

I get it. But I volunteered for a magic trick,  
not a slow murder by flying monkeys.

3.

Glinda Permit me, please,  
to exit this wind shear and lightning ribbon.  
Tell me I can retire from storm-chasing, that this is the part  
where the floor of false gold falls out; this is the part where

you excise Kansas and Tornado Alley and asbestos  
snow from my body and I drop into the emerald  
eye of Oz. I click my heels, you wave  
your wand, and we whisk away in the Wizard's Wall Street

air balloon—pretty pink estrogen-  
injected bubbles and ruby slippers be damned.

4.

Glinda            There's already a whole  
Wizard order after my autonomy in anatomy.  
I don't need my own house hunting me too—  
bamboozling me like a scarecrow, poaching like a lion.

According to the Wizards behind gold  
curtains: before menopause—the natural  
end to my body's wicked viridian witchcraft—  
to remove the anatomical source of my monthly

self-sabotage and guerilla warfare is the ultimate cinema sin,  
so you and I settled on slippers and estrogen in excess.

5.

Glinda            We settled on the magic  
of modern medicine, skipped the trial phase  
due to the stages of rust corroding my parts.  
But Doc, these past 28 days on the pill—

I've been twining around Kansas, twisting  
around in cyclones in waking and in sleep. These past 28 days  
have me bawling for Aunt Em through a smog throat  
stocked with lit cigarettes. Frankly, these past 28 days

have me the closest to cutting myself  
out of this motion picture—skipping straight to

6.

Glinda            Since the onset of this supercell:  
there's been a new pair of scissors, a broom  
head bristling with scalpels—something carnassial  
in my hand every morning. My revived suicidal ideation

naps like dawn-lit dew under my bed. I have no idea  
when it will wake and strike. There's no foreshadowing  
wayward water buckets and melting. Hence,  
a narcoleptic's insomnia. Ergo,

the coma of my healthy death-fear. Thus,

not the solution.

7.

Dear Glinda I tire of supplying the red  
dye for birth control's sparkling shoes. These pumps  
cut off my circulation for days at a time and still  
don't fit. It's been documented for decades—

Since the days of Billie Burke, Margaret Hamilton,  
and Judy Garland. There's no use in beating the dead  
horse of this plotline. The Wizards are enraptured  
by the Broadway adaptations, the million-dollar re-reproductions

but I want out of the storm, out of Kansas, off the pill—  
a one-way trip to Oz without a house falling on me.

8.

Dear Glinda This sacked set of bones  
was once my body—not a tornado seed, not a Wizard's  
production. It was a little rain-worn. It was a shrine  
endangered ever since I showed up on the front stoop,

but it didn't start as Kansas. It wasn't  
always full of squall and smoke. It was Oz-  
adaptable, Technicolor, ready for real gold  
bricks. A body mine. Once,

before the studios and slews of scripts,  
I had a penny's worth of good

9.

magic in me.  
I want it back now.

## Glitter Bomb

It arrives. I swallow  
My decorum, I haul that sucker  
Past the out-of-service elevator,  
Up thirteen flights of stairs— gauntlet  
Of shove and wrangle—to my apartment door.

The guts I would hunt and spill if this monthly  
“Gift” ever came with a greeting card:

Inside, the top pops and boom—  
It’s over for my carpet and security deposit.  
Embedded into the shag rug my landlord picked:  
The shimmering silica aftermath  
From some lackluster prom. Drunken, over-swirled disco ball  
Bits infused in the kernel cracks of the hideous popcorn ceiling  
That just came with the place.

*Look what you get to deal with, bitch.*

My not-so-welcome mat for the walk of shame  
After another bad Bumble date, the iconic red  
Carpet rolled out after an unexpected  
Flash of menstrual-mottled underwear  
During a clash between skirt and city wind tunnel,  
The clearance-section welcome-wagon after another hospital hold,  
Another sudden obituary in the family.

This shit’s never coming out.

Every micro-sparkle on the floor, adhered  
To the shag’s mopy fibers, between  
Bathroom tiles and cracks  
In the kitchen’s laminate flooring— a symptom.  
I own nothing with enough heft  
To bear the house fire this glitter gift sparks  
But my own carpet-sizzled skin.

## Healthline: How to Manage PMDD's Impact on Your Mental Health

### Yoga

When PMDD rears its ugly hydra-heads, there's no better way to start the day than with Surya Namaskar. When in Uttanasana, extend your breath to the bottom of the abdomen, then further: to the vaginal hood. This ritual will really make you feel like a girl-boss Greco-Persian-Arthurian warrior who's fallen on their sword. Flowing through Chaturanga Dandasana, move through the rest of the cycle 10% faster than whatever the menstruating body's speed limit that morning. Just downward dog it out! Downward dog helps:

- avalanches of vein-deep fatigue
- Arctic drowning sensations, glaciers funneling sewage down your gasping mouth until the blackwater is as body-saturated as any other hormone—like adrenaline, progesterone, cortisol
- spontaneous magnetism between your legs and a semi truck's barreling front bumper
- any pesky rhinoceros horn skewered through your lower half
- the insatiable thirst of organs as they desiccate within the body, goldfish-gaping for the coldest crevices in the warmest seas—that which only trenches and light-hidden littoral caves can satisfy

### Essential Oils

Mass-manufactured and overpriced only. Research has shown that anything under \$50 will not do. Consult an out-of-network doctor before use and, after the doctor ghosts you, you're good to go! In the morning, post-yoga, use half of a pinky-sized vial. Do not apply oil directly to self. Distribute using a diffuser found exclusively in Whole Foods, exclusively sweat-shop constructed, exclusively promoted by white women with thin privilege on Instagram and TikTok. You know the influencer type—she whose original content consists of ads for obscure beauty brand and promoting Amazon “shopfronts” where they catalog favorites and earn commission money to sink into offshore trust funds that afford them McMansions and/or L.A. apartments and/or Chicago condos at nineteen. The effect of this holistic practice should be the most calming thing you've ever experienced.

### Spearmint Tea

Steeped strictly for 106 seconds at 139°F in a room at 294.817 Kelvin. Add a 1/18 teaspoon of blue nectar agave, a medicine bottle

measurer of oat milk, and a sneeze of real lemon juice. Make exactly like this or it won't work. The lemon must have been picked from a Chilean grove within the last 6.5 hours, or it won't work. Drink at least 264 mL of the final product, or it won't work. We recommend astral manifestation and inhaling diaphragmatically through the nose as you drink, or it may not work.

### **Supplements**

Must be priced like the essential oils, and overpromoted like diet (laxative) teas. Take one a day. If this doesn't make a difference, ignore the instructions on the bottle, and crack open the pills. Reduce the contents down to a liquid, then inject like heroin. Each cycle, return to the supplement store dealer in your backyard, and double the dose.

### **Organic Moringa**

Non-fair trade brands only. Dampen skin, then sprinkle generously over self. For good measure, pour a line of it around your bed so it looks like mutant ants left a seaweed-green pheromone trail behind. As a precautionary measure, shake at least three tablespoons onto your shower floor, as though applying a cleaning product. Then, return to the bedroom. Remove lower garments and undergarments. Mount bed. Swing hips in exaggerated circles chanting "I MANIFEST, I MANIFEST, I MANIFEST THE END OF THIS FERTILITY TEST!" Beat on aching uterus with fists for good measure. Alternate between circling clockwise, counterclockwise, and reapplying moringa to self. If you lack a bed or fists for this, you're (even more) out of luck.

### **This \$5.99 App**

4.1 stars on the Apple and Google Play stores! It changed the life of some totally-real woman named Stephanie! From Topeka, Kansas! Don't ask for any other identifying information! This app can mitigate ANY symptom of PMDD! Plus, if you subscribe for \$20/month or \$238/year, you earn Pity Points each cycle that can go toward a replacement uterus! It costs 76,800 points, and you can only earn a maximum of 75 points a cycle, but it's so worth it! Trust us (experts), just download it—you won't regret it (at least not any more than you regret living when the PMDD flares LOL!)

*\*If you buy through links on this page, we may earn a small commission.*

# IUD

local anesthesia  
upon insertion only.  
for extraction: a xanax to induce  
waking dissociation, to allay the baying  
bloodhounds in the childhood-  
hunting grounds pink cur copse;  
speared through young anatomy, that for the gender artifice  
this canal doesn't host of which we will not speak.  
among the splintered spokes enough depth to spelunk  
the trauma at the operating room door. on the hunters' health wheel. i.e. check  
for extraction, pray as the scrub-clad poacher preps  
the copper stem's threads within you his speculum's chivalrous,  
in your meaty undergrowth. not entangled  
tusk-rooting pray the feral pigs  
try, cervix hoof it out of the cunt-  
like flimsy soil. however extinct escutcheon intact, earthed, not burrowed into  
fungal infection pervades four times the succession chances are,  
during swine insertion. this is as likely. this the hunters shrugged at  
dagged risk the simple belly-  
hound dog's must take & bodies like this  
this is authorized conservation. take & take. good girl.  
he pries the poacher strokes his firearm;  
though the body reacted bad dog at the puckered deadbolt,  
herd. he tugs the bitch-leash. to the prescribed boar  
a little pinch. a little more to go. attagirl.  
bother asking about brace your axial sinkhole & don't  
extinction option; the egg  
spay the invasion that which would most surely  
the dogfighting. the boars close in on you; issue, dissolve monthly mutilation monsoons,  
to poach lay down on the table. stay.  
to rewild; an egg is to let the dog out  
that population control doesn't load is not the sport hunting way.  
smooth into a poacher's fun  
gun. so come, pesky  
not-quite-cis creature. spread  
those legs like a good hunting  
dog. attend awake the procedure—  
your imminent razing.

## Harvest Moon

After the harvest, every time  
You try to cook a meal:  
Some slice of you on the cutting board.

You place a red bell pepper and grab  
A chef's knife. Left hand  
Assumes the position of prey,

Prep item on the chopping block. Put  
Down the knife. From the refrigerator  
Crisper, extract a lush cilantro bouquet.

Return to cutting board. The leaves  
Coalesce into a hunk of your cheek. The stems  
Swell into blueberry veins, plump with arterial juice.

You grab the packaged ground beef.  
At this time of the month, scissors are absent  
In your kitchen as a precaution; so

The plastic skin over the meat curdles you must  
Tear with your teeth. This becomes, as always,  
An accidental act of autocannibalism.

Your tongue, once again severed at the root,  
Plunks into the sauté pan. Cardiac valves  
And bronchioles spill out like loose cereal.

The food processor, intended for dried chiles,  
Tomatoes, garlic cloves, you've taken to your own mouth.  
Teeth shatter like windows. They season your dish.

In this mincing and julienning of your parts,  
You collapse to the linoleum,  
Naturally. Not so different from a slaughterhouse pig. Naturally,

Guests in your dining room pound  
Their forks and knives, demanding dinner. Every month,  
You don't recall ever inviting them in.

## Cemetery: Inside Jokes

booger on the pres  
the obama meet-and-greet  
you just had to be there—

at the meet-and-greet—  
ticket stub swept away spit  
trail of Chicago's sewer

pipes in their egesta  
riptide i leaked daggers  
dug through cysts & stomach

mr president  
i'm sorry i was  
doubled over a block away

from the expo where  
e snotted on your suit & i was  
running trying to be there

i couldn't

luke's graduation  
nonna's dementia 2019  
reunion the last chance

to come out—the one  
gay grandchild—just had to attend  
i just had to be there

seldom did my meat-cast  
bone bag heed rsvps  
sent months in advance

you just had to be  
there to get the joke—*we crowned*  
*luke president with his cake*

i was going to be  
there i'm sorry mr president  
i'm sorry nonna

i couldn't

the dollar improv  
show the food truck festival  
charity concerts

event-specific  
anecdotes inside jokes flushed  
down the city drain

spit-sealed guarantees  
in gelatinous mucus  
curdled eggs & cum

there in my studio  
*my birthday party* they said  
*can't you suck it up*

*debbie downer wait*  
*just wait bleed & wait stay*  
*there* outflowing 'til menopause—

I Didn't.

## Scenes Guest-Starring the Sanguine Eel



    eighth grade health was supposed to equip them,  
    at the very least, for dark chocolate cravings and pincushion cramps. Alas,  
Florida—  
    with its classic Machiavellian wisdom—cut



    that part of the curriculum right when they, host incubating, finished the  
seventh grade; unfortunate  
    as architects raising glass houses on the San Andreas fault. And anyway,  
People had never mentioned to them,  
    around them: the breeding ground for the sanguine eel, the scythes circling  
their hips like hula hoops  
    vying for a Guinness World Record. When People said *bloat*, People  
didn't mean engorged as a hot air balloon around a colicky propane



    hydrant. The sanguine eel bred and breached  
    on the Yuletide evening of their sophomore year; arrived with a grand  
impression of mustard and ketchup pus gushing over the season's first snow.  
In the middle of their annual family gift exchange,  
    they sneezed,  
    and the sanguine eel blew  
    its first nosebleed: condensed pollen chunks raking sinuses raw, no tissues  
in reach—an eager bathtub faucet of clotted skin secretion right



    over the heaping present pile. Post-holiday, life  
with the sanguine eel  
    has gone as well as that



    during the lucky months. When the sanguine eel wins the body's  
sporadic zodiac lottery, it seizes a kidney-  
    sized rock. It shatters a window—any window—into its personal door.  
It vomits rotten egg  
    yolk over the MacGyvered threshold, thus marking its territory

and its triumph. When the habitat boasts a scarcity of windows, the eel snips through pink wall insulation like a dull scalpel sawing through taut cranial pressure toward a shrunken amygdala. Grey matter seeps and sprays with the consistency of a split citrus-and-toothpaste ganache. Whenever, wherever, and regardless of heat, flatmates and family members of the sanguine eel's



host  
always ask why they insist on expelling  
such a hot mess. Included in the sanguine eel's jackpot: a steel bind cuffed on its host's tongue. Frenulum of the mouth,  
pinched with a glass speculum and pierced with the sewing needle furthest from a clean sink. For every inquiry, every cycle, as the eel pleases,



the host shrugs. They pantomime a half-brained perpetrator resigned to a repulsed jury's fourteen-minute guilty verdict. From the gallery, the sanguine eel titters while spraying slime spittle. To complement its bald air breathing—its gills apparently superfluous—the eel tosses its titters to every echoic corner; then, everyone at the host's back snickers. Every cycle, the circle of friendly faces around the host contracts a little. The sanguine eel plugs into their personal fire hydrant and pretends  
an entire neighborhood is ablaze—a cul-de-sac of glass houses slapped together with swamp-



sticky humidity turned  
Rocky Mountain forest amid the driest thick of a 21<sup>st</sup> century wildfire season. Somewhere in the social courtroom, a fire  
sign in the zodiac order howls with mean girl laughter. Probably a Sagittarius. It's usually a Sagittarius. The Sagittarius is the sanguine eel's favorite. Damn Sagittariuses.  
Each time the cycle starts anew, at least four People ask the secret sanguine eel host if they are a Sagittarius. They, the host, must bite their Everest-blue lips, chew open a crimson creek from their cheek  
to sell the eel's act of masochistic autocannibalism, and nod. They claim the shattered glass disaster. Shrug. Further questions come  
fresh from mouths shaped like a chronically disappointed teacher,  
which the host redirects  
in their best theatre voice  
with questions about niche world records. The sanguine eel inserts a cigarette into its own yawning



gape and takes a long  
drag. Then another. The host hacks up, hacks  
out a London chimney. Of course, the eel gets away  
with smoking anywhere—restaurants, middle schools, plane bathrooms,  
national parks, you name it. Outfitted with cigs  
to spare, it treats PTSD triggers like a family friend's  
shooting range. As the sanguine eel sprays and sprays for five to seven  
business days, as the host's social circle thins  
and condenses, no one  
hears, smells, tastes, feels  
the sanguine eel's other symptoms—its glitter bombs, chum-summoned  
shark attacks, cystic reef, diarrhea dialogues, et cetera—



no one sees any  
of it. The chain-smoking, firehose-wielding eel recurs and re-  
curs. It replaces a few milliliters of hemoglobin and plasma with its sulfur-  
ous bile each cycle. Sometimes less.  
Oftentimes more. Since the eel's arrival, the host's gynecologist often  
demands a cessation  
to this vascular extinguishing, the elective exsanguination, the hula  
hooping with scythes. The host gets their first  
gynecological exam at twenty-two and procrastinates the next  
annual appointment whenever a doctor, nurse, nosy receptionist chides.  
Most gynecologists the host visits chide like the eighth-grade health teacher  
they didn't have, like the men in their family, like the friends who lapse  
into strangers, like Florida, like the eel engraved into their skull—chide  
as though every cycle is something other than sophomore-



year Yuletide and wildfire season. As if the host is a self-selected  
Sagittarius. As if the smoking sanguine eel plots anything less than further  
burglary and hijacking that will culminate in pre-menopause  
highway murder. As though



## Internal Ultrasound on a PMDD Patient

*You may feel a little pressure.*

Gel and slush  
from a Yukon spring    licking the speculum blades.

A dagger tongue plunging past the splayed lips,  
past the throat  
of their cervix.

One blade now a pair of deer horn knives,  
demanding    Heaven of a hellscape.

A plastic light shines on necrotizing flesh  
and deeper you dig,    white-knuckling the belief  
that this pustulous dark is simply a wrong turn,  
an easily-corrected dead end.

Onward with the scouring. You—  
  
still buying into a matte pink fairytale.

Left turn toward their right egg,  
the dark expands into abyssal.  
Into the flesh corridor, built like the barrel of a gun.

In a claustrophobic chamber,  
A yellow cyst leaks noxious gas,  
a sick sun. You finally notice—  
something louder than a gunshot has echoed here,  
and often.

Your little light illuminates  
some sadist's assemblage of death threat graffiti.  
Yes, you realize,  
something spine-snapping, bowel-bursting,  
something human-hating has echoed here.

Often.    And you didn't believe them  
until,    cure-desperate and light-hungry,

they agreed to the restraints on your examination table,  
the double lock and deadbolt on the closed door.

To buy your belief, it cost them  
a nineteenth-century cruciation—  
twenty-eight minutes of stabbing and rending them in two

in a conquest to convince yourself  
that angels can dwell in even the darkest bodies.  
*How does that feel?*

## Cystadenoma

benign mass most ovarian cysts are *functional* as in egg drop experiment successful shipshape simple silly follicle single satsuma up to potential pomegranate in size a one-ibuprofen-dilemma & get back to work ovulating most ovarian cysts resolve on their own within thirty days forty days forty-five fifty sixty with time & patience with downward dog guided meditation through a paid app with juice cleanse intermittent fasting & ketosis with only acute to severe abdominal discomfort painful coitus with breathing have you tried breathing distended gut weight plates sandbags functional chains menstrual hemorrhage spontaneous rupture fainting on the job at the place that'll fire you if you call out because of your period again your benign mass unfulfilled blastocyst failed ovum your elective alleviation surgery if you've got the dough to play with your pampered pussy overblown *lady problem* glorified gore you've got the bank account to build a baby in there functional breeding grounds & a totally benign bump cyst sac silly tissue pesky pimple bundle of uterine esotericism important as translating baby babble contact your doctor only if you & your benign baby bump have trouble getting pregnant

## Elective Hysterectomy, with Complete Notes

In the United States, any woman<sup>1</sup> of or above the legal age of consent<sup>2</sup> can technically agree to<sup>3</sup> a hysterectomy. The vast majority of doctors will not authorize a hysterectomy unless at least one (often two) licensed medical professional(s) deem(s) the procedure “medically justified.”<sup>4</sup> When there are no official threats<sup>5</sup> to a woman’s (see Note 1) life, a hysterectomy is deemed “elective,”<sup>6</sup> and therefore not covered by any insurance plan on the American healthcare market<sup>7</sup>. Additionally, for women (see Note 1) between the ages of 18 and 35, virtually no disorder, discomfort, or extreme depressive symptoms<sup>8</sup> can meet the criteria<sup>9</sup> for medical justification. All other alternatives—medical<sup>10</sup>, lifestyle<sup>11</sup>, and otherwise<sup>12</sup>—must be trialed for a minimum of two weeks each before a hysterectomy is considered unequivocally necessary<sup>13</sup> for a woman (see Note 1) aged 18-35. This unofficial policy persists due to the extreme physical and emotional risks associated with the procedure, as a hysterectomy is a major surgery. Possible complications<sup>14</sup> include: vaginal dryness<sup>15</sup>, decrease in sexual libido and general disinterest with sexual activities<sup>16</sup>, fever<sup>17</sup>, mild bladder infection during recovery<sup>18</sup>, cardiovascular risks<sup>19</sup>, among other severe side effects.<sup>20</sup> Due to the irreversible nature of a hysterectomy, the procedure also eliminates all possibility of biological<sup>21</sup> pregnancy, which may lead to depression<sup>22</sup>, anxiety<sup>23</sup>, and general psychological stress<sup>24</sup> in some women (see Note 1).

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> n.b. / Correction: person / who menstruates

<sup>2</sup> *above the legal age of consent*— / i.e. / the federal façade which dangles / complete / autonomy / as a carrot before a bunny the government determined it would starve / to death / at its judicial gender / reveal party

<sup>3</sup> see: the more severe synonym for *ask* / which precedes any procedures, agreements, or discussions of treatment—  
*beg* / beg for / as in: / how / hastily demagnetized lodestones / beg for / a bearing, upended / polar diaspora / as in: even the hardiest succulents / beg for / water in extreme drought / as in: / eleven states / actively extort pleas / from felons of nonviolent / drug crimes / (the most common type of felony in / the united states) / coerce these / individuals / to crawl across the marble waste / lands / on their hands and knees / to beg for / so-called *inalienable* / rights / to vote / to speak—  
beg / as in: / in / north america, oceania—anywhere addressed / by a white- / washed name / indigenous peoples  
beg for / the land that is their ancestral right

<sup>4</sup> an exchange / that is acceptable to subsets of the population / obsessed with statutory reproduction / especially: subscribers to the dogma *man up* / *no pain, no gain* / *put some backbone into it*

<sup>5</sup> i.e. opinions / from mostly male doctors / believing that / a menstruator is the director in a hyperbolic dramatization of their own biopic

6 sc. / frivolous, unworthy, superfluous, wasteful, situationally / abhorrent, inappropriate, conventionally tactless and un-  
civil, barbaric  
7 for more information / see: encyclopedia britannica's entry regarding / history's most notorious serial killers  
8 i.e. / the chronic decision to indulge in obviously avoidable (self-) / flagellation  
9 modern medicine's / masculine standards for *real* / *suffering* / bar any / symptoms indicative of 20<sup>th</sup> century / feminine  
hysteria naturally  
10 e.g. multiple forms of birth / control / menopause / in an \$1800/month pill<sup>†</sup> / plus hrt / hormone replacement / therapy  
addition / or removal of anti- / depressants and/or antianxiety medications, etc.  
† only \$1600/month with insurance / financial aid options available / from the manufacturer abbvie: generous thoughts  
and prayers // contact abbvie's financial aid department / reachable exclusively by phone / with at least one  
interdepartmental transfer / n. *Capsule Vending Machine: Pharma's Financial Aid Inventory* // for more information  
and an eight-page form that would make HIPAA / raise an eyebrow / please do not contact the department / again  
after you and your doctor submit an application—ever  
11 for viable lifestyle alternatives, see: pop medicine sites, especially those / inundated with articles from cis-women / typically white  
typically under the age of 25 typically strangers with the concepts of financial instability and outstanding student loans / who tout  
the panacean powers of suburbia- / based / yoga classes, *exotic* / eastern herbs and supplements, foam / rollers and phone / apps  
that may or may / not give the author a small commission  
12 *otherwise*: / according to southern baptists / over 50% of american / politicians / hobby lobby executives, and other entities  
without advanced medical educations / and degrees prescribed / motherhood is the healthiest, most effective / alternative /  
to a hysterectomy  
13 n.b. imminent risk of death / does not count as  
absolutely, *unequivocally* *necessary*  
14 sc. each / of the listed ailments / should be considered as a high-risk outcome, regardless / of (uncommon) frequency  
15 o, the insurmountable horrors / of a slightly-parched Fuckhole  
16 o, the blasphemy, the inescapable damnation of a flesh pit in want of no dick  
17 if a fever manifests post-op / in the vast majority of cases, it develops / in the immediate / recovery / phase during which  
the patient is under hospital / supervision  
18 *ibid.*  
19 definition and details of cardiovascular risks / uncertain / conflicting and not / available / at this time / due to lack of research  
funding / interest  
20 *ibid.*  
21 i.e. superior  
22 depression / may also develop, however / in cases where a patient is refused / a hysterectomy

23

sc. anxiety / from the baptists and politicians obsessed with continued colonial / growth / also see / shrewphobia

24

i.e. a wide range of vague and societally disagreeable behaviors and mind- / sets like / iterations of homosexuality and non-binary gender identity / alternatively / dispositions / historically classified as *queer-* / *ness*, *frigidity* / *spinsterism* / *devilry*, *hemophiliac* / *delirium*, *hysteria* / *pathological penis envy* or *medical* / *incompetence*

## Capsule Vending Machine: Pharma's Financial Aid Inventory

An inexhaustive list   An 11-page application asking for information that not even your mom knows about you  
Confirmation email   Instructions   *Please reply to this message if you have any questions*   Fine print at the bottom  
*Please do not reply to this email*   *This is company inbox is not monitored*   Application pending for 1 business day  
Business day   Business day   Rude voicemail to your gynecologist  
Accusations that you and your gynecologist mailed a blank application   Rude voicemail to gynecologist  
Disconnected

callback number   Second application   Application pending for Business day   Business day   Business day   Business day  
Business day   Business day   Business day   Missed call from gynecologist's practice to financial aid department  
Business day   Business day   Wrong phone number listed on company website   Business day   Business day  
Business day   Missed call from gynecologist's personal number to financial aid department   Wrong phone number listed on company website   Wrong email listed on company website   Correct phone number on company website  
Disconnected

call   Business day   Gynecologist calls   Business day  
Minute on hold   CEO who lives in Trump Tower   Minute on hold   CEO who helicopters to work   Minutes on hold  
Dropped

call   You call   Minute on hold   Minute on hold   Email financial aid department while on hold   *Please do not reply to this email*   Minute on hold   The financial aid department at the aforementioned CEO's company   Minute on hold  
Lack of concern regarding the integrity of your personal data  
Disconnected

call   Long weekend   New wrong number   Company Financial Aid Contact   8:01 AM call   Minute on hold  
Minute on hold   *If you're receiving this message You are either calling outside our business hours or we have stepped away from the desk*   *Our hours of operation are MondayTuesdayWednesday from 12 PM to 4 PM and Friday 8 AM to 10 AM*   *If you are calling within those hours We will return your call as soon as possible*   Business day

12:02 call *If you're receiving this message* Business day  
~~Returned call~~ Missed call from gynecologist Full  
voicemail Business day You call Transfer to *someone*  
*who can help you* No established voicemail Disconnected

call ~~Returned call~~ Business day You call Minute on hold  
Transfer to full voicemail ~~Returned call~~ Business day  
Business day ~~Call answered on a MondayTuesdayWed-~~  
~~nesdayFriday~~ Gynecologist calls Full voicemail  
Business day You call Minute on hold Minute on hold  
Transfer to *someone who can help you* No established  
voicemail ~~Call answered on a MondayTuesdayWed-~~  
~~nesdayFriday~~ Business day You call Disconnected

Your gynecologist calls from her personal number Minute  
on hold Disconnected

call Gynecologist obtains new personal number Missed  
call from you to your gynecologist Business day Friday  
You call *someone who can help you* Minute on hold  
Transferred to a breathing speaking human Second  
application number Hung up on

on Missed call from you to your gynecologist You call  
*someone who can help you* Leuprorelin for the company's  
monkey colony care technicians ~~Leuprorelin for former~~  
~~employee attempted whistleblower over oozing rat colonies~~  
~~& primate pillories~~ These metal maze subjects bred &  
bought & brought to die Minute on hold Minute Minute  
Minute Minute Minute Minute Minute Leuprorelin—  
DISCONTINUED

## Notes to Self: Non-Binary Enough

- 2019 -

another doctor declares my gender a social trend,  
insurance reiterates that my comfort and right to my body is elective,  
I think of the fish filet knives I tossed

after discovering the little white lies of wild fisheries—  
the ghost gear and seal concussions, drowned turtles and dolphins stroking  
out—the mass-manufactured statistic perjury.

Now, I'm not about to carve into another tuna,  
but those filet knives would make a quick meal of the invasive  
specimen in my body of water, blood, and brine.

Ovaries, uterus, and fallopian tubes to table—  
flesh-pink tablecloths and a sushi boat for ten—with those knives, I'd serve  
the most sustainable meal anyone in the industrialized age has ever eaten.

- 2018 -

Tuesday, I change the blade of my razor  
& consider extraction, making a trash can of my unwanted uterus.  
I saw it like a surgeon: split open my abdominal cavity  
With the dull blade, run the old razor around like a garbage disposal.

Think of the Fox News headline, the dishonor that'd do  
My science degree: silly girl  
Stepped out of the shower, Googled scalpels from anywhere but Amazon,  
Hunting some bulk price for bathroom experimentations, & everything  
Went as well as mankind could expect.

- 1999 -

When I hover  
over my dollhouse as a child,  
I am not the mom, I am not the dad,  
I certainly am not the dog—  
I am the god.

- 2012 -

The only one on the girls' swim team  
Who considers thrusting into their open locker  
Both before and after practice—  
pelvic impalement on the latch.

This isn't some hope to rip open a portal to the boy's side.

I just want less fold, less flower petal, less pink button and pretty sheath.

- 2015 -

Asexuality  
Doesn't mean I'm doll-crotch smooth.  
Meanwhile the razor—

The locker room I practice  
Versus  
The locker room I Mys.

- 2022 -

"You guys"  
"Ladies"

You are casting a net around everyone, anyone  
Trying, trying & failing, flailing.

Those old trawlers of second-person plural pronouns

drag  
y'all

down.

- 2008 -

i make toast  
like my grandmothers,  
my ancestors, your ancestors  
did long before us.

nothing fancy:  
a dollop of honey  
the same salted butter

- 2017 -

—my grandmothers awaken,  
needing.  
While I scrub the sleep from their mouths,  
I scroll too much on my phone,  
returning no texts, skim the SciAm newsletter, check in on Lady Gaga  
post-*Poker Face*. Just one  
Innocuous hallway  
ghost  
avoiding Instagram, Dodging 21<sup>st</sup> century  
republicans and scientologists—  
you know, little  
things good for cholesterol, healthy  
blood pressure.

- 2006 -

a quiet between my bones  
  
no one's  
  
henhouse incubator, no chickenshit  
  
or roadkill on the superhighway; as in:  
  
old world, vulgar latin, hummingbird-  
  
evasive, question mark answering question  
  
mark



## Butterfly Knife

Plucking away our species' final hours,  
the frenetic sun shovels the tide pool  
between my sand-smothered hips and thighs.  
I foam bread-starter from my slit, purge:  
a broth of gray matter, a forced birth.  
Before the four horsemen arrive,  
I catapult the broth jar with catgut, brain,  
and bite blade under the subfloor rime in  
a photic orchestra pit. I terminate.  
Ghost precipitates. Fresher  
ozone. My labial grooves mist. All  
this loaded tongue pours out, dissipates. The sun  
ignites remnants of wet yeast. String up  
a hammock in the vacancy: my body as air,  
my body as nirvana, my body  
My body.

chin to stringed wood chrysalis, I wrench awake,  
white-knuckling a purloined boxcutter—  
Fiddling violin throat:  
what will it take to cut the cacophony—  
What gives me the right—  
to strum a shriek, up-bow ricochet and blitz  
fallopian worms already liquefied—  
what will give me  
The right to tune this fecund  
violin, modulate its key, whittle  
the red reprising day? The right to empty  
the ovaries on a pointed gun; to swim,  
butterfly knife style? In this cocoon  
skin, I am a motel guest, an open blade—  
certainly not the god of any body—not  
My body.

## Idle Moon—

cored and carved like any other halloween  
pumpkin left out to rot

apathetic above empty incubators, shriveled turnip city, enough bodies  
to smother new england in its “new age” entirety—

bland regolith idling on the edge of myth-  
breeding grounds—what can you offer now  
that’s sweeter than snack cakes dyed  
traffic light yellow, a superior distraction to tattoo gun drilling

against a spearpoint sacrum when contorted  
into a scorpion stinger injecting its own host

first-time fertile body is open farm is a child conscripted  
into war under your waxing signature on an unratified article

in the geneva conventions—so, beyond a torch  
suckling on the last juices of a triple a battery, how much more function  
have you, really? what syzygial tricks have you left  
to enrapture the attention economy of your astro-audience?

clog another century: weighed-down waves beg for the lunar  
treatment—rife with plastic colonies, frothing from carbon-sick clamshell mouths—

to be sampled, documented, analyzed to the last  
decimal place in their own over-funded science, but

in your perigee, people these days capture and peddle  
phenomena in dollar store frames, like the one hung  
on the wall opposite the toilet in my dead mother’s  
panic room—smeared and shining with goopy viscera—

how did it feel when the air force dismantled  
the nuclear bomb aimed at your twilight zone

please, describe it for the fallout babies who grow up entangled  
in power plant playgrounds—my best friends doused in gasoline right by the boiler—

what do you offer that is brighter than the amazon aflame  
in the name of cosmetics, agave veganism, and palm oil;  
eager as an assault rifle pointed at an elementary school in america while the cops  
sweat away life after life in their outside idling—it may be midday here, but

you see them—the matchsticks struck at conception, snuffed and snapped  
upon the discovery of eggs in the hot hutch

what have you for the ghost house force-fed its own splinters,  
then condemned for its collapse, then rebuilt into another playboy mansion

don't you have anything better to do nowadays than freeload  
behind the firmamental tears in the light pollution?  
why don't you do something useful  
for once—swallow a tesla factory on california's coast

pile the split sticks into an obelisk that you detonate  
like a fourth of july firework next to a labrador's ear, why

don't you pilfer a rusty trowel and turn it on yourself monthly  
like the rest of us who came out clamoring to rot—

see if you can scare us, we dare you—  
give the nuclear arms race a run for its money,  
retrograde into fireballs and a third world war,  
signal and aim another mass extinction asteroid

right into this puny, wet rock's cunt—  
i'm begging you



## How to Feed the Cock Coop

6:41 A.M.:

Already time to feed the puffed-up roosters again  
each the true king of the contemporary world outside his coop  
screeching at the incessant citrus of the Colorado sun  
from their overpopulated roost and run. Again  
the ground and wire are feathered and tarred  
pungent with the blood and guts of some poor wild hen that came wandering in the night.

6:45 A.M.:

I prepare a bucket of wholesale grain  
spraypainted holy gold to sate their mulish rooster mouths.  
time to fluff up my feather cape make them believe I am here to peck  
coo and roost to kick it with the cocks' crowing  
duel against the docile dawn ushered in  
by their decadent strangle-throated screams.

6:59 A.M.:

As I fill the shit-stained tub I assure each one  
that he is a pretty bird. Who else will protect the whole wide farm  
from hawks and coyotes and wily hens if not Him  
He is the king bread-winner king of the hill king of the cocks  
of course of course of course  
how could this big rock rotate without him shrieking it forward?

## Baby Diner Blood Rent

Bon appétit.

This baby is overdone,  
past the point of over-hard.

Get this scrambled egg out.

There's a whole buffet  
of my insides in the toilet bowl.

Monthly special.  
The bloody week where the pigs eat for free.

Every month,  
I pay  
the pigs at the bar  
for their feast on my wasted potential.

Fried thigh. Candied lips, candied eyes.  
Jellied brains. My special procreation soup.

Eat me up.

Eat me up and do it while you can,  
because this diner loses value every month.

The pigs at the bar  
say they'll feast until I bake a placenta.

Reap its profits.

Serve them another pig.

This fine establishment is losing  
worth with each menses.

Someone send in the roosters,  
crow for the cocks.

Bon appétit.

## In Another Life, I'd Be a Cathedral

If this haunted house were a temple,  
I'd beseech the church

For upkeep funds, stained glass murals aggrandizing  
Some saint other than Jude, who's lost

In the triforium. I don't forfeit my organs  
To a thornless devil with his silver tithe;

Don't pay with ruin-tuned chorus and wine-stained wedding nights  
The taxes somehow innate with such a fertile ghost-

body: this site rife with crumbling chimney brick,  
Demon-punched windows, walls with fissured paint collecting

Congregations of black mold. My hag house born  
Again, renovated to reverence, absolved of baby

Locust plague, exempt from silver sermons  
Hammering rotten fruit harvests into the supper

Table and padlocked refrigerator ribs. A temple birthed in any Anno  
Domini era re-sermonized beyond these trespass-battered doors; my wrap-

Around porch baptized as altar irrefragable; rogue inferno  
Exorcised of its hellspawn hyperventilations, christened into a hearth

Exhaling smells of hyssop lamb and honeyed bread. But this  
Architecture nurtures meals for one, and so the diocese denies me

Such lavish crumbs. As a staid nave packed with prayer  
Kneelers, I live like a chaplain ambling through aisles, holy

After the cleansing of cherry wood creak-screaming. I am flood-  
Exempt no matter my number of spare bedrooms, barren

By design. Under a charitable parable, the church calls this haunted  
House as I do: a temple, a she-bishop's cathedral; and they minister

In the name of no father, no son, no mother  
Mary homily.

## This Is Not a Conversation About My Body

This is my testimony to the panel of unfamiliar judges meant to represent me. This is me on the witness stand, expert in my own body, testifying.

Consider: sometimes the breeding stall ready for some supposedly-blessed life is what kills someone like me both swiftly and slowly. Someone not woman, someone not female, someone womb-bearing—which all translates to no one in your legal language. To translate them into a someone would require an autonomy not afforded to the bodies you view as fertile barn stock. It would require the hilt of a steel decisionmaker in my hand, a knife not afforded to every person like and unlike me, born womb-bearing. The only things dirtier than a sow that won't shut up and gratefully take what's given to her are the mud-slurs: abortion, elective sterilization, female-friendly porn.

Everyone who speaks my swine language also grew up tilting their head back toward a dim Venus, practicing the birthing screams forced unto us until the time of infertility. If you don't comprehend, don't speak. Don't speak to me like you say *don't speak* to girls who don't consent to motherhood. *Don't speak, little girl*, you say to my siblings, *You're just a girl*, which means, without a doubt, we, the alleged girls, are nothing—nothing but a thoroughbred biding time until its heat, its son, its subsequent death. These trials of our kind are not a conversation about our bodies. Since marked female at first glance, there was never going to be a conversation about our bodies—just a shotgun bullet waiting for our post-pregnancy brains.

This is not a conversation about my siblings' bodies or my body. This is not a conversation about my body just like a sex definitively is not a gender, but the majority of the dead generation before me isn't ready for that kind of not-conversation. My assigned sex is a script of that dead generation's making—a litany of domestic torture deemed necessary to the male creative process and my mere right to exist. This is not a conversation about my body when the crew of male writers and male directors wrote the script. This is not a conversation about my body, because my body is a museum exhibit for the male gaze. This cunt is a reservoir of estrogen I didn't ask for and have never wanted, my tits two shallow lakes for men and medicine to suckle and suckle until I'm somehow drowning. This is not a conversation about my body.

This is my Supreme Court decision. This is me telling you

My body is no longer your barnyard. This is not a conversation about my body. This is my knockdown, kitty claws-out mud-fight and I have you pinned. If you can't handle being in the shit, you shouldn't have thrown my sisters and siblings and womb-brothers into it. You're just gonna have to swallow the manure I spit into your mouth. Even atop you, this is still punching up.

This is not a conversation about my body. This is me telling you: I will be dismantling my sex and gender shortly hereafter and sculpting a better Venus than the one the dead tarnished with their white paint. The birth of this new celestial body is imminent, and it cannot be called, in the name of bona fide science and theory, *she*. Every certificate you mar with *her* and *female* after seeing a uterus, I will fold into a paper airplane and chuck it into the plasma of the Sun.

This is not a conversation about my body. This is the sweet, sweet death of the erroneous author. This is an assassination of the curator and the closing of the male museum. This is the antediluvian dam breaking.

This is not a conversation about my body. The wish-list stored in my uterus is a Dark Ages armory and plague, and this is me ejecting it. I'm taking a pill, arming myself with a clothing hanger if need be, and aborting. I am my own knight in sweat-shining armor, not a bassinet, not an empty castle awaiting its heir. This is not a conversation about my body. This is my body. This is my body and I am its sovereign—its judge, jury, and executioner.

## Cemetery: The Subject in Heat

without children & neon  
yolk what's the use in an in-  
hospitable cave system

lavender coastline  
luciferous bacteria  
curdled eggs & milk

sea animus soaks  
the aquatic undergrounds  
surveyors graze trembling

people like this wake  
every bloodless midnight  
cold sweat clammy palms

i wake every blood-  
less midnight palms clammy sailor's  
knots rigging my stomach

a slippery trawl  
net suspended in cold salt  
prowling pelagic gore

when's the last time  
i experienced self-harm &  
suicidal seas

nonna left wanting  
house full i have one bedroom teacups  
kiss my lips alone

when was my last  
ruby cycle? how long since  
my eyebrows refilled

starved grizzlies  
meet goldilocks carving a grandma  
with blunt teeth & cracked nails

eyebrows scratched off  
like seasons snap-shifting  
back & forth barren bush

ruby furious  
faulty oven left on whole  
flame held to vulva

when's the last time  
i experienced my self-harm hunger  
suicidal freeze

the day of my last  
period? how long since i had  
tea my brows refilled

Here lies in the thigh's  
muscle moat rogue pill & razor  
ethanized vampire

bat venous craving  
embrittling the subject's  
trembling femur

digging out gelatinous  
mold a werewolf drips mucus  
masses full as moons

werewolf grazes bat  
from ravenous blade edge sniffs  
its hunger eyes shaky thigh

when's the last time  
i experienced self-harm hunger  
& suicidal disease

the vampire bat  
reincarnates diseased were-  
wolf meet silver bullet

body as pistol  
my gun hand charred shot close-range  
aim for the ruby bullseye

## Obituary

[REDACTED], age 19, passed away following the events of June 24, 2022. Loving parent to their cats—Rosie, Wade, Timanus, and Rue. They are survived by their siblings: their sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and their brother Neil. They will be remembered for their sense of warm maternity, superb cooking, and the idea of what a wonderful parent they could have been.

[REDACTED] is not and did not want to be survived by any children.

The Coneys invite friends, family, neighbors, former romantic partners, Neil's Twitter followers, city council, St. Priscilla's assemblage, co-workers, and elementary schoolchildren to the funeral home on July 4, 2022 11:56-11:58 PM, as local and national firework displays permit. A rosary from the Book of Leviticus will be recited afterward at 11:59 PM. There is no weather contingency plan. In all events, loved ones may call the funeral home at [REDACTED]. Supper—including *torta pasqualina*, rotisserie lamb, ivermectin, and the wrong pronouns—will be served. Visitors must sign the guestbook with their pre-exorcism names.

A funeral Mass to honor [REDACTED] will occur at a time and location disclosed to generous donors of dark money. For those who do not wish to donate, there will be a reading of Pope Gregory I's homily on the sinner Mary Magdalene, on the corner of Hickory and St Mary, directly across from the cemetery gates, July 6, 2022 6:06 AM. People bearing vacant uteruses are especially encouraged to attend the service and pay their respects in accordance with Old Testament plagues. Reverend Pete Iscariot will administer frogs, lice, pestilence, locusts, darkness, and hail. Firstborn sons are exempt from enjoyment of these marvelous sacraments.

In honor of their unproliferated legacy, the decedent's viable death-bed harvested eggs are frozen at [REDACTED] and available for use. Women not yet invested in the joys of motherhood are invited to fertilize themselves and substantiate their sympathies via same-day intrauterine insemination. In the wake of this tragedy, Neil Coney offers his services for fertilization and implantation free of charge, thanks to the generous support from the Make America Pregnant Again Foundation and SpaceX.

In lieu of flowers, please consider sponsoring the adoption fees for one or more of [REDACTED]'s cats, which are currently available through the Texas Animal Society. Due to shelter overoccupancy, cats not adopted before July 1, 2022 will be euthanized.

Please keep the Coneys in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult, unprecedented time. All lives matter. God bless.

## Séance with a Dead Sister

*We grew up pairing Dreams with Destiny Rules and dancing. When did you start feeling this way? Did you ever feel it when I followed your melody with my harmony?*

does anyone remember their womb days  
or their throttled exodus  
from that era & its bedrock  
slumber I always wondered  
if I was ever truly asleep or  
embattled embryonic wrestling & gnawing  
with my tiger shark demons suckling  
selachian as soaked in amniotic  
ooze as I—little parasite  
me little parasite them

*Our brother doesn't get it, I know. He never has. But why didn't you tell me?*

teratoma on the cinereous carrara hex  
tile burst spilling useless  
yellow muscle bundles like fish roe & keratin  
crystallized into fingernail crescents  
the toilet paper rolls shoved against  
the leaky faucet body one  
at a time saturating  
until coagulated sticky with  
carmine honey— those last fourteen weeks  
when I made a tomb of my tongue  
could you not hear the harpy death chants  
scream-echoing off the bathroom walls when  
the sojourn into silence turned  
into residence the shark cage buckled I forgot  
our human language  
but wasn't the quiet loud enough  
then again  
I made no major or minor effort to re-  
hearse the now-rotting vocal chords  
& I'm sorry





