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Queer(ed) Monstrous Embodiment

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QUEER(ED) MONSTROUS EMBODIMENT: WRITING A SICK, VULNERABLE,

COLLECTIVE BODY

Kyla Hupp Garlid

Honors Senior Project

Spring 2018

Contents

Bowing to My Monster	3
Sticking My Belly Out in The Shower	5
Walking Down The Street	6
Electric Flesh	10
12+	13
Nightmares	16
Mapping the Scars	17
My Body is (Not) a Book of Rules	19
I Honor	25

BOWING TO MY MONSTER

One night
time froze
and I

FROZE.

And then I was
visited by My monster

And I bowed
To My monster

Because it's a nice
Monster

Because it's
My
Monster.

My ugly?
sad?
silly?
busy?
quiet?
angry?
bitter?

invisible?
huge?

glorious
Astounding
ravenous

jealous?

sheepish
kind
lovely
MONSTERRRRRRRR

And
Now.

I think of
My Monster.

Like a friend.

with a home
in my home.

that I can
talk to.

that I can
live with.

that I can
be.

STICKING MY BELLY OUT IN THE SHOWER

Hi old friend
let me look at you
What is so hungry inside of you
what is happening inside of YOU

what needs to be hidden
so badly
that YOU

can only
stick your belly out in the shower

b e h i n d a c u r t a i n

Because old friend
asdfsdfasdf
THIS

is where
you

can breath

Remember
you love belly breathing

don't forget
your belly breathing

THAT
will keep you sane.

It's just you and me
Here.

and isn't that nice?

WALKING DOWN THE STREET

Walking down the street

when you're

queer

when you're

really queer.

I mean carabiner key chain

light tips, four times dyed

clinically depressive

been in love with all of my best friends

futch sensibility

Sing Cher in long showers

Nail biting

never fucked a cock

probably never will

kinda queer

it's a trip

and it's not pride yet, or it just

passed

so its no longer cool to be

really queer.

And honestly it's never that cool

to be *really* queer.

And I knew this neighborhood was gentrified

but SHIT!

Stares so severe like they see creeping cryptid

brown hand, white hand sweaty

hold released hold again

postures stiff, conversation stilted

And THIS is a so called haven

cause we've got an endangered species

a single wild rose

It doesn't feel much like a haven when

the SUV slows on a busy road

stops to say "Oh damn baby, that shit is hot!"

hot from the summer sun

hot from embarrassment

hot cause it was our first date

hot with the rage

hot from all those looks

(and who was the "baby"? what was "that shit"?)

eyes eating both of our bodies

their's more than mine

because that gaze always want what it doesn't understand

because

it tastes better

even though

like sin, and sweat, and "exotic", and rotting fruit

I am

really queer

I still make sense to them

even though

I don't make sense even to myself

But that's a luxury

to just be a monster

on the inside

just make no sense in my lonesome

not on display

Not gawked at in the super market

I can be their shield

I WILL be their shield

so I make jokes to keep our minds off the fact that we are being hunted

but

Why do bodies need to protect other bodies in this way?

Like weren't we on a date? But now we ward off cannibals

Weren't we just looking for bread and water and maybe some nectarines if they were in season

Yeah, that was our plan

to walk down the street

but we were too queer

really just too queer

ELECTRIC FLESH

The first day we met

they told me

they were an angel

f

a

l

l

e

n

cast out

hated by their creator

hated their creator

named Zekiel, in a past life

Talked for hours in my room

door shut, hiding from the party

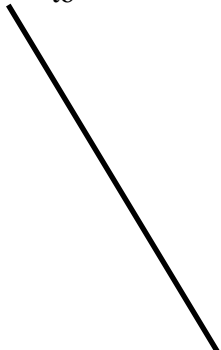
nervous and too stoned

hands folding and unfolding

first papers, patterned cloth, last stories

It was just my heart in my throat and their eyes

Skin and limb and lung contorts

tight rope from rib to

rib

we are we, a circus freak

with two heads

one house

I shot an angel with my father's rifle

I should have set it free, but I let it bleed

Pin me up onto your wall

keep close

blessed at night with rose water and sandal wood

Now dizzy with peach gin drink

kissed cheeks

sloppy propositions

But a moment ago

time slanted

one beating body, electric flesh

guts poured out on table top

feast of fears, fresh or festered

inscribing name and *This was a good day* on now sacred pages

our first fusion

12+

CW: Transphobic violence, description of murder, guns,

At least twelve

trans women and men have been murdered

just this year.

Christa Leigh Steele-Kundslien, 42, was found beaten and stabbed to death in her Massachusetts home on January 5th. Her husband, Mark Steele-Knudslien, was found guilty.

Viccky Gutierrez, 33, was stabbed and set on fire in her Los Angeles home on January 10th.

Celine Walker, 36, was shot to death in a hotel room on February 4th in Jacksonville, Florida.

Tonya Harvey, 35, was shot and killed in Buffalo, New York on February 6th, in what police are calling a “hate crime”.

Phylcia Mitchell, 45, was shot on February 23rd outside her Cleveland home.

Zakaria Fry 28, and Eugene Carroll Ray 70, were found dead in a trash container on February 19th. They reportedly died of blunt force trauma to the head and face. Albuquerque police arrested Charles Anthony Spiess, 27, in conjunction with their murder.

Amia Tyrae Berryman, 28, was found dead with gunshot wounds on March 26th in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Sasha Wall, 29, was found dead with several gunshot wounds on April 1st in Chesterfield County, South Carolina.

Carla Patricia Flores-Pavón, 26, was found in her Texas apartment on May 9th. She had been choked to death.

Nino Fortson, 36, was fatally shot on May 13th in Atlanta. The local news station, CBS46, misgendered him in their report.

Gigi Pierce, 28, was shot to death in Portland on May 21st. Sophia Adler has since been charged with her murder.

Antash'a English, 38, died from a gunshot wound on June 1st in Jacksonville, Florida.

The suspected murders of Christa, Zakaria, and Gigi

The three white trans women killed this year

have been caught and are facing prosecution.

The murders of Vicky, Celine, Tonya, Phylicia, Amia, Sasha, Carla, Nino, and Antash'a

The nine trans people of color killed this year

are at large.

NIGHTMARES

I think about walking
to gas chambers
more and more
these days

first will be
black brown bodies
sick bodies
young bodies
Immigrant bodies

I won't be

far
behind

chucked in
fire licked
taught my lesson
too late

MAPPING THE SCARS

A scar on the second toe
right foot
white and shiny
from Barnacles, or broken glass

top of my head still sore
crash of drunken house show ladder
moved too late

thighs swell with stretch marks
and butt and hips
more than eight years with an eating disorder

back of heal
caught skin shaving
liked the red red blood
the sting
and sour lick of the styptic

burns on arm, wrist, back of hand
liked these
cooking with too hot oil
close to the flame, knuckle hairless
boiling water, coffee, steam wand

holding your hands
like holding my hands
like having hands
tracing our scars

cuts cover wrists and arms
I think they're pretty
was release, was peace of mind
hiding crusty bloody relapse scar
from lover

but

that's my body too
my new wounds
pained eyes

Hypocrite cause I hate my body
but you love its soft edges
dimples, and stripes
so maybe
I can be yours if you will be mine

why would you/I not say if I/we needed you/me

silence can be a medicine if you let your body take over
say the things
your tongue could never
would never
have the guts to utter

sweet agony
bites like vampire kisses leave necks bruised
back scraped red
ass slapped
rope cuts
 grid across abdomen, wrists, belly

fiendish freaks with kind kink
knife to navel
edging dance across nipples
 b
 l
 e
c r o s s e d
 s
 e
 d
 bloody

infecting pain
to wake up the skin
prescribing the recommended dose
under our supervision

being choked out by your best friend
 by spliced soul mate
its bliss

MY BODY IS (NOT) A BOOK OF RULES

I think of my M I N D
its many doors and cabinets and hidden passage ways

5 minutes long
or an
h

o

u

r

or more

like a home
a house
of leaves

it leaves

expands and contracts

but-thenIcna't thinkstraightandallthe walls fall on me and I'm buried in this wreck

of my own making
?

And I wonder where did
THIS shit
come from

Like a gift?
surely it would come with a card

maybe it's my mom's

or my mom's mom's

which would make sense
becauuuuuuse

she is a horder. She collects things to keep her warm. And safe. And real.
And she has lost most of her sanity, but she still wants her house. And her things. and
probably not her daughter. And probably not me. But she wants her car. even though she can't
drive.
Or else she shouldn't drive. but she still needs all that goddamn stuff. And she kept buying stuff.
Until my mom wouldn't let her anymore. until she went ~~crazy~~.
But she's always been crazy.
But I guess this was different because she

forgot what love
was
is

she forgot to love
her own daughter
her favorite daughter
the daughter that she sometimes thinks is her mother
that's how much she loveshates this daughter
my mother

maybe those things
these things
were to forget about her crazy
to forget about how much she loves
her daughter (s)

her babies

And I guess is she is Crazy
because she did
try
to kill herself

but we don't really talk about that
And also idon'tknow if my mom
wants to talk about that

so
wedon'ttalkabout that

but that **does** mean that
my mom
has been two moms

one for her
one for me
one for my sister
one for her brother
one for her sister
one for my cousins

oh shit
I didn't get the numbers right
Anyways
the POINT is.....?

that.
IS
an awful lot of clutter

to keep in one's mind

an
awful lot of stuff
to keep remembering

so why not just forget

why not just keep it
in one of those
cupboards

dniheb
one of those doors

tight
and
SHUT.
and dead

a little

And the thing
about this
about this right here

is
that you can see all of this
Shit
all of this stuff
all of her stuff
all of her's her's stuff
on me
like an itch
or a plague
or a curse
or
a

gift?

Yeah it was supposed to be a gift
just like
this body is a gift
this life is a gift

but also
sometimes I want to hurt
THIS
 body

and
sometimes I want to kill
This
 life

Snuff it out like

something you'd put in a box

something that my
nana
would keep
 kept
in her garage

or somewhere else
sad
and cold
and lonely

Why the fuck did
She
havetobe
so sad
and cold
and lonely

to make my mom
her own mom

but she does actually really love me
and my mom

and she's actually
not that cold
just crazy

and she calls her mom
oh wait
my mom

yeah that's right

she calls her again
and again
and
says it again and again and again

it meaning
I. Love. You.

but

who is she saying it to
and
why is she saying it

so fucking much
like are you
praying
or reminding yourself
because
you probably DID forget

And HERE

are patterns

many

patterns

I wish
I could
forget.

I HONOR

Teachers and guides who have led us to wreckages again and again with answers and questions

Crying, laughing, and gossiping in community

Sad child selves

 closeted, enraged

Fear and acting despite it

Those who struggle with depression and live despite it

Silence and the inarticulable parts of trauma

Invisible work, invisible illness, and the commitment to make it visible

Bodies that hold eating disorders; their sorrow, rage, perfectionism, hungry to be loved

Those who have been erased or silenced

The effort that recovery takes

The shame and relief in making yourself throw up and the taste and smell of vomit in my mouth and on the forearm

The continuous work of getting up

Angry black queer femmes, radical in their softness

Caged bodies who fight to regain stolen humanity

Cooking for myself and others, nourishing our bodies, healing and loving collectively

The anti-capitalist work of napping, queer sex, and caring for the body as it is

The peace experienced when brain goes nice and calm and quiet and when you allow yourself to experience joy in spite of all this

The dreaming up of better worlds