

this you don't hate



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here is me

i have a secret

i have an awful secret

and i can't tell anyone

you see, my life

would fall apart

if anyone knew

everyone thinks

i'm some one different

but here is me

Barbie

My sister-in-law gave me a Midge doll set when she married my brother. Midge came complete with a wardrobe of designer floor-length dresses, with sequins, and tulle, and three-quarter-length gloves.

But Midge, an older model, had short red hair styled like a housewife, not like Barbie's, long and blond and flowing. And Midge could never sit in a chair because her plastic legs were rigid and couldn't bend.

For my sixth birthday I received a P.J. doll, one of Barbie's friends. P.J.'s hair was blonde, like Barbie's, but it was shorter. And here eyes were brown, like mine. Not eyes to dream of. Eyes like mine.

When I finally got you, Barbie, I treated you like some sort of goddess, you with your disproportionate figure and perpetual smile. When you never eat, you can stay thin. You can always be happy.

I took plastic kitchen shelf liner and caulking glue and lined a shoebox so you could have a bath tub. I taped a straw around the back of the tub so you could have jets and extra bubbles when you soaked.

My father's pool table was your lake; a second shoe box served as your speed boat. You took all your friends for boat rides along the green; Ken, the Donny and Marie dolls, P.J., even Midge.

But I couldn't be like you, I had to eat, and I could only stand on my toes for so long when you stood like a dancer perpetually. I couldn't always smile. I was only a little girl. And I was cursed with brown eyes.

What did you teach me? I pressed you next to Ken under your pink and white bed sheets, but your plastic bodies made a loud noise when you came together. Your legs never intertwined. Your smile never changed.

And now, all grown up, I visit my parent's house, and they tell me I have boxes of toys that could be thrown away. Kitchen accessories for the Barbie camper, beaded dresses I made myself. And I think:

I could give these toys to my niece, so she could play, so she could learn. And then I decide: no, these dolls, these values, these memories, they belong sealed in cardboard boxes, where only time can take its toll.

issues

you think i'm going to come
running back to you again, do you,
you think i need you so desperately
that all you have to say is that
you do care about me
and that you don't want me to
leave your life and that you
don't want this to be goodbye,
well, you told me good-bye once
before and i took you back
but now you've done it again
and you think it's all so easy
and you think it's all roses and
candy and i'm not going back to you
and what you did isn't good for me
and i know i sound like a psychai-
trist now but you have some
issues you need to deal with
and i can't be your counselor;
i need someone to counsel me
and if you need help you can't
help me, and i've figured that
much out: you can't help me

more whiskey sours

i need more

more money, more orgasms

more clothes, more cigarettes

more whiskey sours, more heroin

more love

loved you the most

I heard last week that you died.
I called your office to ask you a question
and the receptionist had to tell me.

Of course I didn't hear it from your family.
How would they know to call me?
They, who don't even know my last name
ans think I was a heathen and no good for you.
They, tied to you by blood, never knew
I wished for that tie to you too.
They never knew I put you on a pedestal.
They never knew I made you my god.

I went to your funeral today. I wore a veil
over the brim of my hat and stayed in the back
while they lowered your casket into the ground.
When everyone was at your gravesite
the minister talked about the ones you left behind:
your parents, your brother, your sister.
What he didn't know was that you left
me behind too. The one that loved you the most.

I knew I could never have you in my life.
But I needed to know you were alive, so I could go on living.
And the minister spoke of how your family would miss you.
And I thought, what about me.
What do I do with nothing to love.

never did the same

we've put each other through hell, i know
we've tried each other's patience
we've goaded each other on
we've pissed each other off
we've jerked each other around
but i've noticed two things, one
is that whenever you were unhappy
i turned on the charm, i tried
to make your day, i tried to
make you laugh, and the other
thing that i noticed is that
you never did the same for me

run faster

why me

why do I keep doing this to myself

why do I keep coming back

I beg for attention

and I don't know how to stop

and I don't know how to be alone

so I keep giving you

one more chance to make it perfect

one more chance to save the damsel

but I'm not a damsel

and I'm not being rescued

and I'm not feeling any better

because even though I hate you

I'll never let go

so you'll just have to run faster

russians at a garage sale

at our annual garage sale this year
all these old couples came walking by

they were from the russian neighborhood
they could barely speak english

they would pick up an iron. "how much?"
"four dollars." "fifty cents?" "no."

it was a warm indian summer day
we were all clad in shorts and sunglasses

they would point at the iron, a toaster,
a blender. "all for a dollar?" "no."

and all the old couples wore raincoats
and scarves wrapped around their heads

they would pick up a wine glass. "how much?"
"twenty-five cents." "how about ten?"

see you crawl

come on, boy

i want to see you come crawling back

not because i want you here

but because i want to see you crawl

self-destructiv e

i've been self-destructive before
and you liked me then

maybe i should go back
go back to those days
when it didn't matter who i was with

why would it matter
unless it was you?

shame on me

you are stubborn, moody,
angry and hateful
you want to hate
and you want to hate me

and i keep thinking that
you couldn't even fuck
your way out of a card-
board box, you ass-hole

but i still tried, i wanted
to make it work with us
and the highs were too high
but the lows were too low

and i've tried, i've worked
and i've slaved for you
and i wanted to know
this couldn't fail

but once again
you've proved me wrong

fool me once
and shame on you,
fool me twice

and shame on me

sorry flowers

i bet you think a box of candy is
all you need to make everything better
and you'd still say i need to lose
some weight, sure, feed me candy, okay.

i love "apology candy" as much as i
love "sorry flowers" and people at the
office keep saying i must be a great
girlfriend because i get flowers at the

office but then i tell them that they
are "sorry flowers" and that the
worst kind of flowers are "sorry
flowers" because you'd rather have no

flowers if it meant that you two
were happy all the time. and no one
understands what you're talking about.
and neither do you. so good-bye.

the men at the construction site

a woman told me
that scientists did an experiment
where a woman
first walked past a construction site
with her head down

no one bothered her,
no one noticed her
everyone at the site left her alone

then, later in the day,
she walked past again
in the same outfit, with the same stride
but this time she walked with
her head up,
more confidently

and that's when she got
the calls, the whistles
from the men at the construction site

and you tell me it's not deliberate
and you tell me it's not an effort
to keep women in their place

you feel more

it's like this:
run your hand
back and forth
in a line
parallel to
the ground
that's the world
you see
it's that line
now raise
your hand
a few inches,
maybe six
above that line
and run your hand
back and forth
and that is you
you're above it all
you're better
than them all
you can do more
you succeed more
you feel more
and then,
you see, you
raise your hand

a few inches,
maybe six more
above that line
and run your hand
back and forth
and that is
who you love

and when you feel
you're above
them all
how will you
find someone
higher?

who you tell your dreams to

we were driving down the freeway
you and me in the pick-up truck
and your girlfriend inbetween
where you could move the gear shift
and it would mean so much to you

and you saw something that you thought
was beautiful, and you said, "look
at the lines, look at how it was made"
and you were inspired by the beauty
of an everyday object no one else noticed

and your girlfriend, riding in the middle
said "that's him, people think he's crazy"
and i thought, "no, it just depends on who
you tell your dreams to" but i couldn't
say it in the truck i wouldn't say it

this halloween

this halloween i got a costume together
i wore a black page-boy wig,
a vinyl dress and matching vinyl boots

it was strange for me
i'm not such an outgoing person

and every time i was left alone at a bar
someone would hit on me
usually someone ugly
but i didn't tell them to leave me alone:

i gave them a fake name, a fake number

and looking back, what made the difference
was not wearing the revealing clothes
but wearing a wig, changing my identity

and it's not that i'd do it again
but i must admit
i really like being someone else
just for a little while

the things warren says

I know about this guy,
he sucked his eyeball out
with a shop-vac

he went to the hospital
brought the shop-vac
with him

he was okay, but they
couldn't put his eye
back in:

it was all mangled, and
besides, it was covered
in potato chips

the measuring scale

Here's an addition for your
degrading terminology
of women list. In the
construction field they
(men) have devised another
form of measurement.
When something is being
lowered or fitted into place
they will often refer
to an inch or so as:
up or down about a cunt hair.
They have gone so far
as to determine that blonde
pubic hair is the smallest
increment and at the other
end of the measuring scale
is black pubic hair.

Pam, via the internet

why don't you dissect me,
take every single part of me
and equate it with power tools,
sports and violence?
bang me, screw me, nail me,
hammer me, bag me, pump
me. shoot it in me. maybe you
can even score.

if we're talking about
measuring scales, what about
the scale that defines the way
you treat us:
on one end is the minor stuff,
calling us "baby" and "sugar,"
whistling as we walk by, but
then move along the scale, get to
the blonde jokes, yes, they're so
funny, then how about a pinch
in the rear at the office,
well, that's harmless enough
and while you're at it, porn
movies and magazines, what harm
do they do, and hey, women
have always worked at home,
so you should have all the jobs
and get the better pay anyway
and since we're just your pro-
perty, fuck us whenever you
want, i mean, hey, you're doing
it already in every other aspect
of our repressed, oppressed lives
so rape us, smack us around
knock us down a flight of stairs
that's what we're here for

god, i don't even know how to
measure these things any more

warren stories

i heard this story about this fat woman
who sat naked on a pork chop bone once

and didn't notice when it lodged itself
among her folds of fat. years later,

when she felt a sharp pain, and the doctors
couldn't figure out what it was, opened

her up and found the pork chop, and realized
that her skin just eventually grew over it.





This you don't hate.



From the picture window
the snow drizzling down
fell effortlessly, silently:
I wondered if outside it

was as quiet as it looked.
The snow blanketed the
grass, past the pier his father
made last summer, out



over the lake. Everything
glowed in an untouched
whiteness. No footprints
yet. Just falling snow.

From the couch I looked
at the larger-than-life
snowflakes fall, one after
another, all gently gliding

down to the ground. I could
not look away. And you said:
This is why I like winters.
See, you hate winter in the



city, but this, this you
watch for hours and don't
get tired of. This makes you
smile. This you don't hate.

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