

Client Intake Questionnaire

Please answer each of the questions below. Please withhold where necessary.

PAST HISTORY

Briefly describe your childhood.

I watched none of the movies. Impostered recess. Spoke without speech. Toe walked, as though Barbie, as though knighted.

Were you raised by anyone other than your parents?

God. He was mine until I ran out of grief. The minutes uninstalling. A man spits on my mother's hijab, silvered water. Faith shuts eyes to filth. I tried to be good.

If you had difficulties in the past, what have you done to survive?

All day I've attempted flowers. I'm not alive on purpose.

SEX INFORMATION

When did you first become aware of your own sexual impulses?

When I fractured my skull. That bright open saturn.
Body leaving its body leaving its mother
board. Is this not desire?

Any relevant details regarding your first sexual experience:

First unfiled police report. First tallest memory.

Are you sexually inhibited in any way?

Only in certain angles. Sometimes I play dead. Ghost gold.
Every lover passes through me pronounced. In vowels. Like an ambulance.

SUBSTANCE USE

Have you ever abused prescription drugs?

Pain on a scale of 1 to 10. Of syllable to lightning.
My threshold gets hungry.

How often do you drink?

Until my palms dull, crucified. So starving the body's
thirst. Until I'm stranded blood. Until bones struck
with dreaming.

**Have you ever gone to anyone for help? Are you ever
brilliant? Are you an impossible stone. Rotted? Do you need
reminding?**

Yes.

Is there anything else you'd like us to know about you?

No.

bones arched like flowers

after alejandra pizarnik

in the middle of a rain storm i take my neighbor's dog
for a walk, as promised. i'd just been laid off

and i needed the money, and who doesn't love
sending Black girls into sharpened water.

she watches me attach the leash.
goodmorning ma'am is working from home

today, per the echo of her pinned fingers. her dog
suffers from dementia, cannot hold a sit

without his legs sliding from under
him, bites when his memory brackets.

on our walk he leans against me like a better
ghost. i want breathing to stay

away from me. this can't be unlearned.
and the dog, just himself, no talk of selfish

for letting the ache reach his eyes. am i lucky
that guilt isn't flexible? perhaps this is all

i ever was, considering the audience before
the room, because nurse beth can't live without me,

because she cuffed me to the hospital bed to book
mark the animal, my face into the hot bowl

of her neck, five unsupervised minutes.
the dog mistakes another dog for something nearer.

sometimes dying gets distracted. the wind slants
the rain until it burns, until we're glossy

at the traffic light. i could stand this
in my sleep.

carrion

the dead deer we saw
on the way to your place,
brain knitted wet outside
its chest, once lighthouse
twice blooded, pulse instinct.
a body shot out of its head
quarters. every car's a fan tonight,
slowing to watch a heartbeat unheat itself.
who do we rot back to? steel
aluminum stare, ants crawling
the iced unblinking. the radio's playing
a song about getting undressed.
wanting someone down to the breast
bone. & the vultures dancing halos
at the head, wingwritten crown,
a five second Jesus. & then it's gone,
you're driving so fast it breadcrumbs
the memory. when you say shut up i shut
up. to die in front of everybody.
a tomorrow with no tonight.

pornography

wearing nothing but the breath of a ceiling
fan: ON. in bright red. the color of a bruise before
bruising. the cameraman positions him leaning,
just enough to tense the wrist, lidded eyes
touching everything. the want is already timed,
no real losers here. three dogs sent to hunt for water.
there's many ways to clutch a fistful of hair, that swift oil
anointing the palm, if only they couldn't get enough.
highest muscle to the softest bitter. when they kiss
they look collarless. and then the camera, cut
close to their emptied breathing, cannot bear
an unset table. two actors less afraid
of telling bus driver to *stop, this is my stop:*
this is my faster: two consent forms. two stars
less afraid of dying.

barbieland

you're beautiful and that's where god stopped.
somewhere between retaliation and rest. pulsing
back his sleeve. our fathers know each other,
i don't have the details. both are probably wrong
about me. pigeon bellied fathers and dark TV
sets, standing through every hour. i'm never
where i should be, not that it matters, not with all
this blonde lightning. you like girls with lilac
breath and first day obedience. lemon paper
girls. i didn't think to straighten my hair, or bring
the music, and you hated this, and hand to god:
show of hands: has anyone here ever stood
in a kitchen pitched in stove light, stared
at the tilted gas ring they haven't gotten around
to cleaning, but wanted to, but the black of it. flung bone.
no one faces i with lights on. i the animal. death survives
grief by not moving. by now i'm staring at a wall.
as the wind chases snow into your ear.