

Pink Lady

A collection of five poems

If I Were A Song...

I would cartwheel through the air and backflip
into the tubing of your ear and pirouette
straight into the pockets of your consciousness.
I would weave your aches
against you like a spider spins, turning
circles over and over again. Chorus at the arc,
verse at the branch. Turn up the volume
so the spider behind the glass of your review mirror can feel me.
Crunchy bass guitar pinching
your sinews, they connect muscle to bone,
awake from dream life.
I'll whisper your armor away
while you drive home from Walgreens
in the sun. Ivy spilling over the suburban walls
after the pharmacists denied your prescription for birth control
yet again. The doctors won't prescribe it right.
That day after your boyfriend says you're boring,
I am the melody of bell chimes stinging
sweetly in your chest until you scream
your excuse for singing.

Scars Make it Real

Part I: When I was three,

A beam hit me on my nose. It gave me a scar. Two kids, little boys, carried a big orange plastic beam. Bite-sized construction workers cleaning up the preschool playground. As they turned around, they could not have realized **I was there**, that the beam would swing **with them**. That I would dare to be in the way.

Part II: Today,

My family denies that it ever happened. They say I made it up or dreamt it like so many other things in life even though **I clearly remember** the scar. A little thing at the crease of my nose. The scar has smoothed over, so I have no way to prove it. Seeing takes **over all other** senses these days. It leaves nothing left for the rest of them. Have you ever heard a scar? It's not the same as seeing it.

Part III: My cat has seizures.

Or spasms, I can't quite decide. But the vets all say she has scabies — mites that cause them to scratch their ears off their heads. For the human equivalent, bite your bottom lip. Now keep biting harder and harder until **there is nothing left** and your teeth touch and you see blood. It doesn't count if you taste it. The metallic meat in your mouth is nothing without the red goop dribbling down your chin. But she doesn't have that. They have no idea what her symptoms are because they don't know her like I do. My tiny tabby furbaby. According to the internet doctor, her syndrome is called hyperaesthesia, meaning she twitches when she's excited, but I'm scared to make an appointment. They probably won't **believe me** and I will lose time and money.

Part IV: My sister says she was roofied

at the club. I believed her, but not at first. She drinks often. The first time she vomited a clear liquid like water while I painted a picture of Santa one room over. Mom was tending to every piece of her suffering. This time, she says a large family from Oklahoma tried to separate her from her friends. She felt drunk for 24 hours. That's much too long. She says she knows her own body. **Her friends didn't believe her**. If the big family took her away and gobbled her up leaving nothing but her left pinky finger would they believe her then? I guess it depends if the finger was bruised or not. I believe her though. Even though **there was never any scar**.

Three Sunsets

You are tall, candy, magnet skin
a map traveling through me
electricity highways.
I hold your head with all my arms
Small kisses, smooth like slides.

The sky was three rainbow sunsets.

One

Rich, heavy colors.
Oily blue and orange that dripped down.
Your eyes caught the sun,
held it in their palms like precious liquid
gold. Sand mixed with freckles on your cheeks and forehead,
made a beauty I can't describe.
Coarse dark hair like a field of ribbons
or a song. You made a mosaic of seashells in the sand,
assembled the puzzle pieces.
I will find every shell on the beach
just so you can place them down exactly how you want them to be.
You showed me the constellations.
Cygnus and Casiopia and Lyra
and satellites and planes like a stupid movie.
I was shaking from the ocean chill.
You scooted close and held me.
You don't know this, but
I turned to oatmeal.

My best friend says if you listen to her art, you can see her naked.
I showed you my poetry, so much more naked than I could ever be.
Deep, ugly,
unfiltered. If I had to compare, and I know it's wrong,
a thing I shouldn't do, not fare to him, not fare to you,
but it's in my brain wrapped up and oozing
out, an ugly abscess unholy.
I've covered it so far with willpower, but I'm tired, so let me put it down here and be done with
it.

You help me clip my cat's claws, you tell me which earrings best match my dress, you tell me I'm valuable, you tell me how you feel, I've written a poem about you.
We dance together.

Two

The sun left too fast. Pink, glowing wisps slashed across the horizon.
A child's painting.
I don't remember the stars. We had no blanket.
You wouldn't sit next to me on my rock
so instead we stood and watched
as the tide licked our feet and threatened
to dampen our shorts. We laughed for a while
because yours were soaked by nightfall.
But then you said we could never be together.
I didn't believe you, or I guess I did for a moment, which felt like
waste.
You looked so scared with your eyes
fixed to the road and all that tension in your brow.
The closest to crying I have ever seen you.
The way you almost broke
when I spoke about trust.

Three

We brought a blanket. There were no clouds,
so the sunset was crisp like an apple in the fridge.
Sharp and clean. Pure color, smoke and fire
red and orange,
faded to pale daylight blue and green,
then sleepy time purple.
This time we did what we should have on the first night.
You told me you were ready
and we both stared frozen.
You never can tell how big someone's nose is until it's poking you in the eye.
We looked at the constellations
again but this time in comfort,
hiding nothing.

Now when I see you I feel I could crumble,
break through the floor and fall forever.
I feel like that moment in the water

when the big wave came, the one I tried to dive under
but when it hit me I was flipped
upside down over and
over again in a salty washing
machine out of control
and all I could do was let the force wash over me
and enjoy.

Even the Prettiest Apples Rot

“All she could do was try to preserve and display herself.”

From “You Play the Girl” by Carina Chocano

The mechanic changes out my car battery for free.

The bouncer lets me pass while my boyfriend pays fifteen.

I pop my car hood and a man appears like a fly to rotting fruit.

“You must be about the same age as my daughter,” he says. “She's seventeen.”

But I'm twenty-two.

He looked fifty.

A customer at my work says, “Thank God you're here.

You are much easier on the eyes than he is.”

He looked seventy-five.

“You look very nice in those pants. You should wear them more often,”

I no longer wear yoga pants around my dad's friends.

“That's Pretty Privilege,” says my coworker, she sounds jealous or critical.

Shadows of Growth

He grabbed my butt.

I turned around to protest, to tell him to fuck off, but when I saw him he was a smile in the sky, so much higher than me.

My spine ached as the bones touched in the back of my neck so I could see his face. The sun sang behind him the illusion of an angel.

I smiled back. He put his arm around me and grabbed my breast.

I kept smiling. I was fourteen and he was seventeen.

My friends were by the drinking fountain. His friends were here, laughing about something. "Are you coming over tonight?"

The lower half of my body turned fuzzy pink, though my mind knew better flashing red in anger. But everyone was looking at me.

"Tonight? Ok." When he picked me up I told my mom

he was my friend's older brother. As I sat down in his car he slid his lighter and an old shirt off the passenger seat. My first breath was tainted by the burnt oak of cigarettes.

As we drove, he put his hand on my leg only picking it up to look at his phone on the road.

I tried to tell him to focus, but the words got stuck.

He stopped in an empty parking lot and pulled me into the backseat. I said nothing. Instead I watched the shadows haunt his face in the darkness and morph his smile to a sneer. That angel from before looked so different without the sun behind him.

He grabbed my waist, poking his thumbs into my sides. I wanted to leave, but for some reason I stayed.

I straightened my green flowery shirt and black choker necklace. I glanced at my pretty blue nail polish that reminded me I was a woman, no longer a girl.

That I belonged with him. He put his hand up my skirt.

The coldness of his fingers made my eyes shoot open. His nails were jabbing claws inside of me, pinching without caring. I don't know why, but I wanted him to love me,

so I clenched my eyes to make pain seem pleasure, forging a newfound numbness, the mark of a woman.

The next day, I told all my wide eyed friends that I had sex with the hottest senior in school. You should have seen their smiles.