

**Collection Title: Pleasure to Finally Meet You**

**The Interview**

“Do you have a boyfriend”

*My lover wears a size 36 DD and Jordan Retros. Her arms are soft and warm and my favorite place to be. Her lips speak the only gospel I will ever concern myself with again. I repent everyday for the sin of loving her. I'm not sure if God even cares anymore.*

“I'm not seeing anyone right now”

“You could probably meet someone if you lost some weight. You're getting big”

*I can either exorcize my demons or exercise my body. I simply won't be asked to do both. I can't afford guac on my burrito, let alone lipo and a bbl. Tried to cut the fat off myself and almost bled out. Luckily my new antidepressants are non-fattening.*

“I start my new diet Monday”

“How's school going? You were always so smart.”

*I'm drowning in \$45,000 worth of debt to get a piece of paper that MIGHT land me a job that allows me to live comfortably in my childhood bedroom where rent is paid in my sanity and not dollars and cents. I suppose I could hand in my soul to settle my debt but I already traded it to the devil for the winning lotto numbers. He gave me the ones from last week's drawing.*

“Really enjoying it. Class is challenging but interesting “

“Anything exciting going on”

*My therapist tells me if I keep improving we can switch to bi-weekly check ins instead of weekly. I am now able to leave the house unsupervised. I bathed today and didn't even cry for more than 5 minutes. The lady where I get the coffee I don't like said I look pretty when I smile which I haven't heard in a while. I haven't touched a razor in 6 weeks.*

**“I'm thinking of getting a puppy”**

“Good for you. Well, it was nice talking to you”

I've never hated a conversation more.

**“Nice seeing you too”**

## **Jekyll, Meet Hyde**

My lover and my assailant have the same lifeline on their palms

It reaches from the uncanny valley between their thumbs and pointer fingers

Casually loops towards the wrists with the grace of the noose I tried to slip around my neck

My lover and my assailant have the same eyes

Dark

Foreboding

Blood and soil mixed in a stew half forgotten by a human-eating giant

His favorite part is the bones he uses to clean his teeth

My lover and my assailant have the same voice

Sweet

A foggy lemon drop

A kind man who offers to walk you home but lingers too long on your doorstep

The smile of Red Riding Hood's grandmother with a few too many teeth

~~My lover~~ My assailant made a war field of my body.

~~My assailant~~ My lover bought me roses to say sorry

My mother rubs the cross on her necklace every time I call

Praying that I have learned that a hickey and a black eye from the same man are both bruises

I ask for a ticket on a plane I will never board

Until the day I finally do

## Quirky

*"I am so bipolar. I can never make up my mind"*

\*Blink\*

Try not to twitch

Try not to scream

Try not to rip the skin from my bones for a moment of rest

In between racing thoughts, try to find a phrase somewhere between

"Totally, that's exactly what it's like" (lie)

And

"I haven't slept for more than 45 minutes at a time in 3 days.

My mind is being controlled by a formula 1 driver desperate for first place.

I can feel my bones, my blood, the overgrowth of my nails, and the third eyelash from my tear duct.

Last night's lover was a stranger who I gave my rent money to to fund exploration of the stars I am too tired to cast a gaze towards." (truth)

I am on top of the world.

I am Atlas holding it up.

I am Icarus 30 seconds before he flew too close to the sun.

The depths of my soul have yet to be explored and yet the journey is one mapped out by countless travelers familiar with cyclical highs and lows

Put on the mask

Shake hands and kiss babies

Lay down and live to mask another day

"Yeah, that's exactly what it's like."