

Mistaken

*Have a nice day ma'am*  
-Café worker to you, 14

Why does that feel right?  
What made you feel seen?  
You never want to correct her  
She stops you, *sorry, sir.*

Two phrases that echo for years  
A simple mistake anyone could make  
to a quiet, long haired boy  
or a girl who looked like one

A short lifetime of moments  
click into respective sockets  
you never wanted to be like  
*other guys*

Like your straight as gun steel childhood friend  
and his territorial crush on you  
*Pheromones*, your mother said  
as if that somehow made things simpler

You knew that the way you liked girls  
wasn't the same way that the buddy  
who punched you in the gut for fun  
wanted to fuck every one he saw

You dreaded the sound of your own name  
no matter the context  
lacking a substitute  
you shut up to minimize its usage  
Your voice still feels wrong  
even when you can stand the sound of it

It wasn't how she first addressed you  
that catalyzed this metamorphosis  
after all, you always looked more like your mom  
It was the revoking  
the stealing away of that brief euphoric moment  
that made you understand what you were missing

## Hypodermal Exposure - 2

### Habits

Will it stick if she tries it  
differently this time?

Is she sick if she never  
falls into motions  
that make her happy?

Why does she stop putting her face  
together in the morning.  
expecting to taste the fruits of her labors  
without a tongue?

Confines

I am comfortable in my own skin  
    beautiful or ugly  
depends on when you ask.  
but I am instilled with acceptance  
of the sort I only see in those  
who come to terms with a body  
they never expected to love.

Peel the skin back,  
    you'll find the  
squirming, pulsing  
    anxious hagfish of  
    my guts.  
Twisting in and out of knots  
the lamprey poised to strike  
and miss  
    and tear a chunk  
    of its own flesh.

Sick

Depraved

Perverted

Belligerent affront to God

Playing pretend in a world I am  
not entitled to

So I make my own world  
Starting with the safe  
and intimate walls  
of my own skin

Visitors welcome

## Hypodermal Exposure - 4

### Universal Cycle

She drifted away from home  
from a familiar that never quite was  
unknown worlds she was afraid to see  
truths unknown until much too late

She drifted away from herself  
denied herself joy in exploration  
told herself she was to be useful  
if being loved wasn't an option

She discarded her past  
Took a mulligan to become someone else  
it would take many tries  
before she found a 'someone else' that fit

and when she did

She held on  
dropped it  
found again  
tried it on  
outgrew  
cursed  
cried  
sat  
heard  
understood  
stopped running

She was every person she had been  
And not being any of them anymore  
Didn't mean they didn't shape her  
Each name and hobby and hurt,  
all pieces of one great puzzle,  
a life to be pieced together  
and lived

Waste Me

One day my hyoid will burst from my throat  
And my hair will fall out and recede  
I'll try staving it for as long as I can  
But we can't stop what we all receive.

I can fight it with pills and with makeup  
I can fight it with ointments and creams  
But one day these bones will be free of my body  
To take what we all must receive.

I'll become who I want so I'll cease as myself  
My bones will have more work to do  
Dehumanize me, return soul to soil  
With nothing inside to refuse.

But it will all be alright, won't it?  
Won't everything go how it needs?  
Everything happens the way that it's meant to,  
Why have veins if we weren't meant to bleed?

I'll rest better than I ever did when alive  
Exhausted each time the sun rose.  
Who will care how I look or how my voice sounds  
When all traces of me decompose?

It will all be alright by then won't it?  
I will finally stop needing to try.  
But I can't (or I won't) picture what I would do  
If I really must lay down to die.

Because like it or not my chest will cave in,  
The maggots and worms will be served.  
And the body I cared for and nurtured  
Will gently return to the earth.