

"emotional unsobriety"

30 minute nighttime run  
stunning older Daddy  
relaxing in his garage,  
six feet away from  
his fresh cut woodwork  
and my sex workshop.  
the urge to use drugs  
kicked in, then I remembered  
the years I spent looking  
for attention in garbage cans.

Panting, I looked up at the sky,  
layered like artificial sedimentary  
rocks. Each ultraviolet sliver  
told the story of an addict in recovery.  
(When we die, we rise to shine  
eternally in shameless neon lights.)

I unblocked you from Instagram,  
downloaded your picture,  
and tried my hand and portraiture.  
but my sleeping pill kicked in  
after the phone meeting,  
so I shivered to bed.

the sketch pencil  
entered my body  
--I dreamed it was you--  
and corrected my sleepy  
work, doing justice  
to the shades atop your eyes  
(to hell with my creative writing  
professor from community college  
who said I wrote too much about eyes;  
the world is ending anyway)  
from which I unconsciously hid.

they remind me of all the times you  
quickly escaped our eye contact,  
Leaving me hanging, a dying heir,  
and grateful for your existence,  
knowing if God had a  
husband, it would  
certainly be  
you.

“Quarantine”

bitter to squash  
spring fever  
on this couch,

I think about  
your wife and kids

my coffee gets  
increasingly acidic

~

Covet

nineteen times have I  
wanted your validation  
they spilled over into  
twenty twenty  
times you kept  
me at a distance.  
the sordid details  
of my addictions  
scared you away  
from me, until  
you shot me a look of  
respect when I got my  
60 day sobriety chip.

Every handsome skin cell  
on your face is a reason  
to hate myself, because  
I am nineteen, still, emotionally,  
no failed attempt at leaving  
my parents, getting married,  
or leaving lust behind,  
no fucking pandemic

will make me look at you  
without that innocence  
and handpicked bouquet  
(2012, 2013, 2045, 3000)  
strewn across the carcass  
of my hope that you'd give  
me a flower of your own

~

## Erotica

an outlandish cowboy,  
who opens up his jeans  
(I'm the pony  
who willingly drinks)

a father figure  
who needs help  
with his woodwork  
and thanks me with  
love on my neck

to be myself and  
treated like an equal  
is all I ever wanted.

having sex with words  
is very comforting,  
but grammar lacks skin.

our union leaves  
no trace of  
scent;

it's only one heart  
that beats in bed.

## Sharpie

this is eyeliner

even after all these years  
I still want six-pack abs  
and listen to Britney Spears

this was eyeliner

even after make-up fades away  
I still “wanna look good for you”  
and have two pillows, just in case.

this is highlighter

even if I mark the crows  
that lightened up my day  
your wrinkles, too,  
will fly away

this is permanent marker  
it's your skin that didn't stay

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