

HEART
LOCKET

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thank you! 36



writing staff

A. Deshmane (they/them) is a queer poet from scorching Arizona. When they're not writing, they can be found wishing they owned a cat (or that a cat owned them). Their other work has been published or is forthcoming in Stone of Madness Press, Corporeal lit, Vellichor Lit, and other places. Find them on Instagram at @aar.deshm

C.J. Dorn is a London-based queer writer who perpetually wishes she were in Paris. She studied Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University, and when she isn't writing, C.J. plays bass guitar and stares longingly at her rapidly growing TBR pile. You can find her work in Poetry Trapper Keeper's inaugural zine 'Hot People Have a Spring Awakening', as well as on her personal website, the link to which can be found in the bio of her various social media profiles. (@writtenbyme_c)

Cloud (they/she) is a 23-year-old London-based poet and 'lover of the queer form and what comes with being human.' Published in 'pastelserenityzine', 'anarkiss' and soon to be featured in 'honeyfairymag', as a poet they write about what lies at the depths of our perception. Find them on Instagram at @yappybebop

Cody Austin is a writer from Belfast, she has previously published works in 100subtextsmag, heroica and the jumble. Cody has a substack and Instagram both named @ulstersaystechno

Emily Peacock is a recent graduate residing in the UK, specialising in poetry. Her poems all have themes of grief in alternative ways, showing how it is a feeling that should be shared and communicated more often. Find her on Instagram at @emily.poetry

With her work, Johanna is encapsulating the experience of being human from a young female perspective, exploring individuals as much as the emotional dynamics of relationships and society. Her writings are mostly in English and German. Find her on Instagram at @johannadoer

Kaci O'Meara is a Glasgow based gothic alternative poet and photographer. She primarily writes works inspired by gothic aesthetics, or her own deep emotions. When it comes to photography she focuses mainly on nature, and political street art.

Special thanks to Laika

Linn Berkvens is editor-in-chief and creative supervisor of Heart Locket magazine. Their writing was once described as 'paranoid', and by another person as 'being the exact type of writing that a 24-year-old living alone in Amsterdam produces'. Hater of labels, lover of many other things. Mostly a big fan of poetry, film, and buttered noodles. Their poetry has appeared in some publications, probably?

Paula Werdnik (1999) is a copywriter and poet. She draws on her personal experiences to delve into themes such as duality, identity, belonging, the self, grief, healing, and feminism in her work. Her poems have been featured in the Dichtober 2023 digital poetry bundle, RevUU, Raffia Magazine, Harness Magazine, Tenderness Press, The Ghoulish Gazette, and other publications.

Find her on Instagram at @paulasbooksandpoems

Quentin is a Writer and Poet from Germany. In his writing he takes a look at the lows and highs from his life, and uses the art of words to create relatable stories. When he is not writing Quentin crochets little trinkets and reads Sci-Fi books

Originally from Lebanon, Tania is an Amsterdam-based poet, spoken word artist, writer, and many other things. Her style varies from observational satire to political activism, feminist anthems, and straight-up family trauma— an all-time crowd-pleaser. Find Tania on Instagram at @tania__shou

Taylor Powers is a poet and festival photographer based in Chicago, IL. She runs Pot/Luck Literary Zine with a coven of queers, as well as attack of the fembots on Substack. When she's not writing, check The Music Box for signs of life. She can be found on Instagram at @teapow



after the tsunami evaporates,
i call my older sister by a. deshmane

she tells me it all comes down to how i toe the line between flawed and flawless (enough).

she
asks: does your skin still
come away when
you're tugging off your sweater? i
scratch
caricatures of angels into my wrists
and feign shock when the scars
are still there in the
morning.

furry, oblong noses where frayed,
feathered wings
should be, and too many
mouths— half-chewed tongues and
peeling gumstrips to boot.

she asks if i still wonder aloud about swallowing jellyfish like prozac.

i balance the phone atop a
tilting heap. i've
collected the bottles
of lavender serum that claim
to relieve my stress. lighting matches on

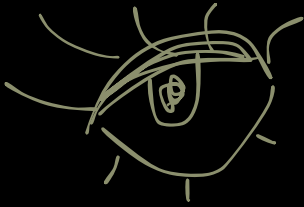
a tuesday is

better therapy than i've had in a
while.

she asks if i still laugh, peeling strips of shredded cuticle off of my thumb.
i
stare down at the socks i've had on for
nine weekdays.

she says mine is a headspace not unlike san fran summers: coated in thick and perpetual fog.

i beg her (my savior) to stay
this time— offer my
lungs on a platter and
pray



eye-contact

by c.j. dorn

*quantum entanglement rips through the space between us,
engulfing everything in its path and subjecting
me to suspension in the lime jell-o mould of life.*

*a single atom is visible to the naked eye if you try hard
enough but looking into it will make you question
whether or not you should be allowed to exist.*

*my eyes hold the secrets of the universe and every
blink sets a beautiful new catastrophe in motion;
i'm sorry i can't stop crying, there's a lot of pressure here.*

*the sand has frozen over and the castles are beginning
to melt, we walk across the not-yet-glass or once-was-
glass and decide that looking at each other is too intimate.*



maybe, it was

by taylor powers

me. face down
in the cattails,
identifiable by beloved
red gore-tex
(but not much else)

maybe, it was

a vision, a vibration—*this*

wood chip path
this river
this *not quite*
feeling flitting through.
maybe, it was too much
CSI: after school
peanut butter toast
talking with ghosts

*how does it feel to walk alone
and think of only the bees?*

Lovely People

Strange, how winter falls upon us so soon,
without an ounce of summer to begin, we
find ourselves on landscapes alluring but
grey to the eye, no named reason why,
perhaps we have been punished for our
sin.

Unusual, where we are placed in time, too
young to know but too old to survive in a
place that is named but bears no soul, *where
did all the lovely people go?* The truest are
open with songs and in rhyme.

Odd, how we can reflect upon events, they
shroud our minds and leave us thin, I am blue
and so are you, the pictures seem aspirational,
what could've been, what was.

Where did all the lovely people go?

Where did all the lovely people go?

Where did all the lovely people go.

Where did all the lovely people

Where did all the

Where

by emily peacock

the rebel angels drive to the beach

lucifer throws his shirt off over his head as soon as the ride begins. balancing on unsteady feet still not used to the earth he was cast down to, he holds his arms above his head. baring his chest to the sun, pink scars under his nipples signal a new kind of freedom and he shouts from the top of his lungs. belial behind the wheel chuckles and sings along to the radio, "when i'm laying on the marble marvel at flowers your love made". azazel takes her oestrogen in the back seat, a grin like a cheshire cat from one freckled cheek to the next. her red choppy hair flowing in waves like the winds from the second circle. asmodeus tries to keep his eyes on the map, roaming his tongue around the inside of his cavernous mouth checking for any road signs but they didn't need road where they were going. they'd packed light. only sunscreen (because even a fallen angels skin still burns in gods light), extra clothing: baggy hoodies to hide their wings and trainer socks for their clawed feet, lucifer had packed his violin everything else be damned if the humans weren't ready to hear such magnificent music he wasn't playing for anyone but himself anymore. "i see the ocean" lucifer exclaimed, almost diving out of the car like those magnificent birds locked in a dance of death. "there are no sights like this in heaven" he whispers to himself like a child in prayer kneeling at his mothers bedside. azazel leans up and kisses him on the chest right beside where his heart should be. "i knew if we went with you we would see such sights." lucifer is warm. warmer than the cracked walls of pandemonium, the car winds to a halt and the angels rush out. painted toes and tattooed skin being beaten by the sun. asmodeus warns belial for the tenth time since they started out on the road to not get his binder wet but the older angel doesn't listen and instead throws it off above his head into the sand below. here on earth. here with their charred wings and the sea as a balm their bodies are as light and as blessed as any seraphim.

by cloud sinclair

why am i perpetually expecting more?

my back is damned & tired // perpetually bent // slipping through
vents // over and over // it feels like i keep deciding on when //
always looking at the ground — here's why i always look at the
ground // sometimes there's money to be found // or i escape the
sounds // or i spot a butterfly with a clipped wing // because
everything is near dead there // instead of everything with eyes //
and i can take note if my shoes get dirty // so i know to clean them
later // not tripping on the steps then // staring at the hardwood
floor now // or so i can watch drops fall into puddles // it's raining
again // i wonder why it always rains on my birthday // it's smack-
dab in the middle of the year // july summers // (i was born a sun)
// but for decades in a row it's been pouring // i just don't
understand // though there's nothing to understand // like most
things i don't understand // like other things that are sad when they
should be happy // maybe it's the bombs // and not watching them
drop // but it's still blowing up // stare harder // counting the tiles
so i don't die // counting the cracks so my mom doesn't // one two
three four five // as a kid i thought those things worked // i still do
// as a kid i never understood the alignments // i still really don't

by linn berkvens

first dates

i'm tired of first dates
i wanna have second dates
and third ones
i want to want to have second dates
and third ones

instead i'm left longing
longing for belonging
longing for that sense
you get when someone
slowly feels like home

i'm going on all those first dates
even not hating it for most times
mostly enjoying myself more
than the person i'm on the date with

not even fair
no one gets me excited anymore
can't compete with you
bored
always reoccurring conversations
trying to get to those recreations
memories in my mind
impossible

by johanna dörrie



god/inferiority complex

by linn berkvens

come closer, if you dare.
i will show you a million little deaths in succession
all of them as painful as the other
and none of them ever permanent.

come, but not closer, you with healing powers
fostering kind empathetic magic
you don't let it get to you.
but you don't get it, do you?

some days i am the lamb
some days i am the slaughter
or perhaps i am the wolf
ripping at my own throat.

i stand on buildings and talk myself
down from the ledge with a killer speech
wishing everyone else would perish
so i wouldn't seem so weak.

the sheets are ripped again, your doings
and then mine, i channel these histrionics
some people call it art, or poetry
but i know it by its true name.

you are in for a ride with twists and turns.
maybe you should have known better.
is it true, in the end, that all this love
doesn't make us smarter?

solutions, i drink until i purge my guts or feel normal
whichever one happens first, and it's usually puke.
scrape the throat catch a glimpse, thinking
i throw up just like a pretty girl.

i can't get up, i'm too fucking ugly
can't get it up, no one wants to fuck me.
the door is closing on me every second
of every single day, and i'm letting it happen.

MY MOTHER'S DAUGHTER

Every boyfriend I ever had
wanted to fuck my mother.
And I don't blame them,
I would've fucked my mother too.

There's something about the combination
of a Virgo-Sun and Pisces-Moon
that makes a woman melancholic
enough to become a poet,
yet stable enough not to kill herself.

I have my mother's sun and moon,
the same winged liner guarding the rims
of my overflowing lakes.
The same legs that have a hard time
staying together.

Except mine are not as long,
and they've never had to carry
the weight of a daughter,
then a daughter,
then a daughter,
then a daughter;
four consecutive wins
at the mental illness bingo.

My mother is a woman more
than she has ever been a mother.
Some days I wish she spent
more time nurturing her poetry.
At least words are grateful,
if you tug on them hard enough
They might give you what you want
without holding it against you.

Sometimes I wish she had actually
fucked a boyfriend of mine,
just so I could ask them
if I got some of her best parts too.
When I write, I think about
all the books she hasn't written.
How I have to make something
of each time she poured
her milk into my mouth
instead of her heart out
on a sheet of paper.

I have no one to feed,
I pour and pour
with nothing to contain me.
With no one else to grow
from my pain.

But if I ever have a daughter,
I hope the Pisces let her
swim away.

by tania shoukair

the girl with the yellow rose

I wonder where she's coming from
I wonder where she's going
she has her head down
staring longingly at the single
yellow rose in her hand
looking closer I can see
as she plays with one of the leaves on the stem
struggling to keep the smile off her face
a single yellow rose
what a beautiful gift
one small token of love that speaks a thousand words
I hope to one day be the girl
with the yellow rose sitting at the bus stop
ready to go home where I'll sit that single yellow rose
in a vase on my windowsill.

by kaci o'meara



found

I found love where it wasn't
usually found
hidden in the cracks
I'd never think to look
it was just luck that love seeped out
of its hiding place and stumbled
into me

by kaci o'meara

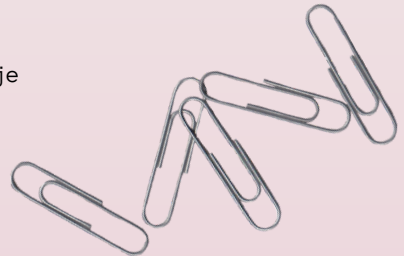
mijn grenzeloos verlangen

by laika

1. Ik wil je
2. Ik wil je in mijn bed
3. Hij wil nu iets van me denk ik en dat maakt me misselijk
4. Ik wil hem niet
5. Ik wil haar
6. Toen de MDMA inkickte veranderde alle mannen in de club in zweterige zwijnen
7. Dat zweterig zwijn wil nu met je naar bed
8. Elke keer als ik een meisje wil, voel ik een zware zweterige adem in mijn oor - hijgend
9. Ik hijg, ik zweet, ik wil je
10. (Ik ben het zwijn)
11. Het safeword dat we bedachten was zwijntje
12. Wij willen elkaar

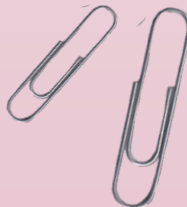


Ik wil je
Ja, ik wil!
Wil jij ook?
Volgens mij wil je niet...
Ben ik nu vies?



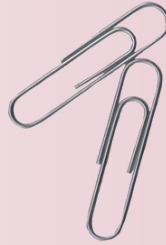
Ik wil je
Jij wil mij soms wel, soms niet
Ik wil dat niet
Ik wil mezelf meer dan ik jou wil

Ik wil je
Ik word gek van verlangen
Ik hallucineer stapels liefdesbrieven en je gezicht in de spiegel
Ik wil ff.normaal.doen.nu
Ik wil dood



IK WIL JOU
MAAR WIL JIJ MIJ
Ik weet het niet
Ik geef op

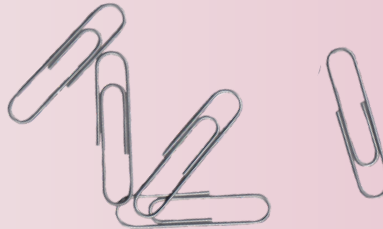
Ik wil jou
En ik wil jou
En jou
En jou en jou
Dit gaat 100% over dezelfde persoon



Ik wil jou
Je lijkt op haar
Ik lijk een bitch

Ik wil mezelf
Ik ben geen bitch
Ik ben een slet
Ik ben eigenlijk maar een meisje
Ik wil een ander meisje zijn

Hij wil jou
Hij wil jou
Hij is daardoor geen slet
Hij is een player



Hij wil haar
Hij is een nice guy
Zij wijst hem af
Hij is eenzaam

Hij is een bad guy
Hij krijgt alle bitches
Vrouwen willen echte mannen
Hij spaart voor een Porsche 911 GT3
Hij mist zijn moeder

dig

by johanna dörrie

I wanna be one with
the dirt
that decorates
the deepest grounds of your soul
lay in it
wallow in it
eat it up
and swallow

I don't want you clean
I want you fucking dirty

and dirty to mean
safe and honest and genuine
dirty to mean
unpolished and raw
and soft and fierce

show me your filth
in all its colors

let's be dirty together
and find comfort
in being
each other's
forest

SOMETIMES DEAD IS NOT REALLY DEAD

by linn berkvens

more like what you said that night
altered me forever

more like cut-up skin instead
or an inked spine, a book that once was mine
it's in your house, and i can't get it back

sometimes dead is not really dead
you said that to me, do you remember?

sometimes you think you're losing everything
but you tend to get dramatic

it's always something else
more like losing myself

which is not everything

more like a place i can't locate
or i sell you my bloodstained couch
and sit on the floor waiting for your call

sometimes you speak like nature abides
it's hard not to believe in someone like that

sometimes dead is just gone
or it's numb
and i can't talk about it

you find yourself wishing for a gravestone
i find myself wishing to be eulogized



THE ABSOLUTE LIMIT

I hear the kettle whistling in the other room and wish
that you'd taken up candle making instead
of drinking ten cups of coffee every afternoon.

I wonder how the needle can cope with the fabric
as it pierces layer after layer, then one wrong move
and it's caught on the plate, snapped, discarded.

The paint stained my hands, and I can't get the
glue out from under my nails; no matter how hard
I try, it just keeps collecting more debris.

Your pencil is too blunt for the paper you're writing on
and I can hear the scratch of the wood against
its former twin, moments from ripping away the words.

When I say goodbye to you each day, part of me hopes
that you'll say 'forever' and not return. Then the kettle
stops whistling, and the silence is deafening.

by c.j. dorn





by paula werdnik

can it be found between the covers of my passport?
or in returning to the place that I was born?
could it be as simple as a place?

I think of a house, now owned by someone else
a city, where old friends have long since moved away

I wish I had etched my name
above my bed
to leave behind a sign that I was once there
to have been more than a guest in each place

my years scattered across the globe
like stars in the skies
with each new friend, an inescapable goodbye

perhaps it is something which is created
not a place at all
but a feeling
that we are forever chasing

MISSING + COME





*these days, it's all we have
static crackles and too much unsaid
she sits with my thumb in her mouth
and i tell her it's a bad habit*

*i watch the screen on her face
study the ways and manners
that she might make it in the end
or i'm anticipated to fish her out*

*climax climax climax
she's clad in lace so often
it seems like it's caging her
i let her roll her eyes back again*

cherry wood

by linn berkvens

let's sing in a band,,,,,
and chant strange lies into the sky ^_^

...so it feels like we're alive /// and not on the brink

so it feels like we might survive
so no one is even thinking we can't.

we are curled up a little too often these days
our spines are bending into weird shapes, we are
pretending to be individual apparitions of half moons

really we're just the same moon
but in different phases.

i know how it feels to lose your mind monday through sunday.
you are spinning now, rambling,
are you still there?

do you also see these clown paintings on the ceiling
or is that a mirror? is it our reflections?

are we real or - - - - - are we reeling?

i think you are going to save my life

and it will suddenly just make sense.
,,,,,like it's not unsolvable
like we haven't been around (,[this way];) ... for ages
and no one has ever managed to hack it.





you swat it away, you say
stop, you're freaking me out, shut up
and *let's dance instead.*



(it might seem fun)

really, we are just writhing around.



humming hymns and creating stains onto the rug
maybe it's yesterday's booze, or this morning's breakfast
or the filth and gall and bile of this earth.



i sound stupid and pretentious!

babyplease ...
ignore this deflated plea ...

you know enough, don't you?
about how i need

how i
want you more than we can ever be.



you, you stranger ijustloveyouhere next to me

against the cherry wood ///// eyes so wide

you can't even see.

by laika

THE ALTAR OF DESIRE

I went to the altar of my desire and nobody looked like you
I went to the altar of my desire and everyone was kind of the same
I went to the altar of my desire and they all had a certain swing in their step

Everyone at the altar
Everyone at the altar was too busy to be bothered by poor little me
I went to the altar of my desire and everyone's hair was tucked behind their ear -
but one little lock had fallen in front of their eyes
the kind of lock you want to touch
put back behind the soft little ear
(the kind of ear that demands a whisper)

I went to the altar and everyone's wings were sprouting from their backs
while they tensed their muscular arms
sweat dripped down my spine I think I could have cried

I went to the altar
you batted your lashes you licked your lips
your glitter eyes your leather coat
your darkest curls your wispy bangs
I remember blushing
I remember blushing about your girlfriend
I remember

I remember interlocking eyes
I remember brushing hands I remember
dancing around the subject

I remember being frightened

I went to the altar of my desire
I demanded worship

It started with the first
a green one
made from Jade
a memento from the other side of the world

so it was worn prominently on my thumb
My daily companion for many months
Without it I could barely leave the house

With time came and went other rings
New Experiences, Memories and Heirlooms

two

three

four My hands full of gold and glittery stones
A shield against the daily stress
five without them it was like not wearing anything at all

six The Jade ring, that started it all

seven The gold ring that has been in my jewelery box ever since I can think (remember)

The ring that started my parents marriage

Another green ring to remember my hometown

A small ring with an even smaller ruby in the center

And the sixth ring, that has been bent and curved through out the years,
the last ring that my mother gave me

It fit perfectly, but it did not really match the shield that I was building

But as the year was ending, I received another one from my stepmother
A ring that holds many memories in itself

He attached himself to the bent ring
as if they were made for each other

The Shield was completed
and filled with memories

Seasons of grief

by paula werdnik

I turn my skin inside out / wear spring like a new coat / I wait for the last rainstorm
before the heat / I remember that my father is dead

saying it, writing it down, feels the way a full stop sounds.

a single unseeing eye / an empty mouth the shape of an "o" / a fist full of soil

we all think "my suffering is the only suffering like this" / growing up is realizing that
my suffering is just like anyone else's / our world is full of hardship

time goes on, oblivious / the jasmine blooms, heady and sweet, with no regard for us
/ the bird sings for no one

perhaps there is beauty in that / earth is both beautiful and cruel / two things can be
true at once

my words land on the page and melt / inconsequential as snowflakes / in these rare
moments even words offer no comfort / there are times when words are just words

I bury my grief deep in the rich black soil / hoping that next spring something
beautiful will grow from it



An Ode to June

It's mid-June & I'm planted in a better place now,
roots are dried up and withered, I shake them but they
do like to drag. I've become a mother to two cats - one
girl, one boy, can't help feeling as if their real mother
should call them in soon.

It's raining & it won't stop, the smell of it is too
attractive & becomes habitual, they need to call it the
'wettest summer ever' just so that I can let the
statement permeate & wither.

It's true that I hold onto small things, miscellaneous trinkets
in hopes that they get used, & I find hope in flowery words,
in hopes that they come true, I close my eyes, squeeze them
tight, sometimes June gets better, sometimes it rains just
right.

by emily peacock



by quentin potrafke

In the rainy freezing winter we met
He was the fire that warmed me
His beauty and charm caught me in his net
but I just sat on the couch with warm tea

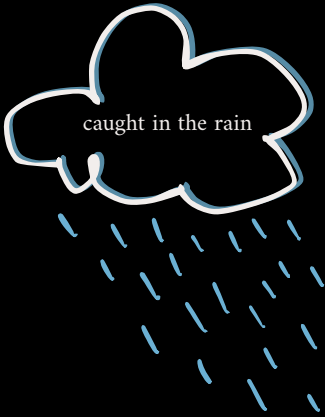
A smile as sweet as honey
and brown eyes that resembled the fresh soil in the forest
His presence made me feel less lonely
I so often think of caressing his wrist

His presence has me seized
laying shirtless on that tiny stage
his eyes closed, I am mesmerized
I run my fingers across and in circles over his chest

At night I think of him
laying next to me
his warm arms wrapped around my body
I am safe when I lay next to him

There are no worries on his mind
He is much more than just a man
At his feet is mankind
The universe is less then

A God



by cody austin

We are talking to different people in the same smoking area.
got caught in the rain, my skin is damp, the shine is off the apple
feeling like an ant on a death March
I can feel him watching, or I am hoping he is watching.
I want to be watched.
I want.
I want to tell him.
I want him.
There's plenty to slip between the cup and the lips. Is he still over there,
I anticipate...

He is.

They always come back, I always go back.
They never really leave, I am gone completely from him.
He is back
...asleep
I cannot find sleep, I avoid confession,
He avoids conflict to abstain from connection.
We are entwined but I am entirely apart
disparate.
The rain is off, I will bolt again
whether he reaches or runs,
it really doesn't matter anyways.
nobody ever comes or goes

by taylor powers

i saw the tv glow



*almost wish
i didn't. taste that neon
taffy—skull pulled,
laced in
melancholy.
i felt what you felt
and still couldn't
leave this hush behind*



*how much do you have to love
someone? to devour them
whole.
lick the flesh right
off their lips; swallow
teeth and tongue,
bones
and all.*

[the time between holding on and letting go
when you are simply nothing]

by linn berkvens

wither softly, baby, you must not let them hear.
i will kiss the cuts on your arms that you hide from the public
so many times, they will start to look like lipstick stains.
there are also days when i lose the plot, just the same.
i am so much like you.


i have missed deadlines and funerals, tons of 'em.
they give me stares in hallways like i don't share their blood.
it feels better to be abandoned together, doesn't it?
we make the dirt our home,
eat the bugs for dinner.

i wear the soft fabric of your sleep shirt on rainy days,
it smells like sex, and it smells like you,
which is kind of the same smell anyway.
i am sinking into the sand and losing my breath,
but it feels like i'm discovering a whole new world.

whisper softly, baby, the dark is just that, nothing more.
i will hold you through the fevers and shivers and every time
you visit your mother's stone-faced home base.
of course i'm scared, i'm looking a monster in the eye.
of course i'm scared.

i remember trying to get myself out of the toilet stall.
kicking the door became a pathetic limple motion,
no punch to it, just in my face and through the mirror.
you know what i mean, right?
you don't have to answer me.

let's lay quietly together between these warm blankets.
i am tempted to feed myself entirely off of you,
the bones you leave behind when you go,
and offer myself up to you when it's my time,
hoping my tendons taste good between your teeth.



An Ocean of Grief

Grief comes in waves
tidal, tsunami, monsoon

I lay on my bedroom floor
caught in the riptide
dragged out to sea
by the seaweed of my hair

choking on the salt of my tears
I hear the ocean roaring in the seashell of my ear

I remind myself that I am 60% water
salt and water

when I stop fighting it
I remember that I can swim
part mermaid by now

in and out - my breath ebbs and flows like the tide

there is nothing to do but wait
and let the storm pass

by paula werdnik

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heart locket!



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until next time & with love,
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