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## 'Art' They Can't See, Lines, Anatomy of Decomposing, October on Danford Creek, Wing Bone, and Taxidermy

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**‘Art’ They Can’t See  
Lines  
Anatomy of Decomposing  
October on Danford Creek  
Wing Bone  
Taxidermy**

*By Kailyn J. Dekker*

The following document includes a selection and submission for the Hilltop Review. Within the file the reader will find five (5) poems and one (1) micro fiction piece. The poems are titled *‘Art’ They Can’t See*, *Lines*, *Anatomy of Decomposing*, *October on Danford Creek*, and *Wing Bone*. These poems incorporate darkness, illness, social issues, and a manifestation and exploration of the human condition. The Microfiction text titled *Taxidermy*, details the interaction between two siblings showcasing the younger sister's mental illness by detailing the delusional and obsessive behavior of this character.

These texts have been workshopped under the instruction of poets, William Olsen & Nancy Eimers and Fiction writer, Thisbe Nissen at Western Michigan University.

## **‘Art’ They Can’t See**

They say,

*I wish I could do that.*

It is the childhood I never had  
and I...

Do you hate your reflection?  
Your frizzy hair, your up-  
turned nose and the dimples  
in your thighs?

We hate the villain we became  
in our happily-never-fairytale,  
when we found pleasure in the scissor edge of pain  
under our desks in kindergarten  
when we found the pleasure in the razor edge of pain  
locked in our rooms, wiping the tears  
of our mirrored reflections.

Conceal: our loaded guns, our blood  
soaked washcloths, our stash  
of Band-Aids, the necessary, not so necessary  
narcotics, pain--  
The buzzing of some sort of art beneath  
our skin, we don’t crow—  
our cloaks  
because beneath we are scared, scarred, and hurt  
it is our attempt at forgiveness—  
we are sorr—  
but they say,

*I wish I could do that.*

It is night terrors, screaming at fabricated demons  
The ones from your childhood mutated  
Into the ones  
And I...

Can you find home in tears?  
Your face to the tobacco-yellowed ceiling,  
Rolling across your temples, Crawling  
Like disappearing little spiders in your hair?

If this house is our home, if this body—  
it's not where our heart is.  
Lost. Some time  
between watching our parents beat each other bloody  
(from the closet we locked ourselves in)  
and  
the day we walked home with blood from our  
broken hymens staining our underwear  
but we deserved it  
because we walked alone.  
We wore sweat pants and we deserved it because  
under our baggy clothes we were still girls,  
Soft peach fuzz hair and he just needs a taste,  
we have boobs, puffy pink nipples,  
Made to fulfill baby hunger. "ohh, baby"  
They say,

*I wish I could do that.*

It is the rattle of my medicine drawer  
full of tablets, capsules, a bag of weed,  
no more emotion  
and I...

We just smile,  
that awkward,  
mouth closed,  
lips thinned,  
curled, half-baked,  
thankful,  
not so thankful

smile.

Because we're supposed to  
smile when they compliment  
our bodies,  
(the scars)  
our art.

## Lines

Somber, the night sings the solitude found swirling between stars

/

I can hear the echoing of black holes forming somewhere out of sight

/

The sun chugs like trucks on empty, choking, gasping, for fuel

/

Every sunflower seed came from a sunflower seed that came from a sunflower seed, back until the first sunflower seed was the first and even when it was the last of something not a sunflower seed

/

She watched as children kicked the heads off of dandelions and whispered to nobody, *it prepares them for the 'real world'*

/

A child painted the sky, blotting and waving his father's brushes, cotton candy, against dusk's canvas.

/

Brush away the bone dust and fuse me together with wire.

/

He kissed my scars and cut me open, planted rage in my bone marrow and watched as this poison painted me pale.

/

I am Hera's rage, her jealousy and humanity

/

Paralytic is the rage that goes unnourished

/

Nourish the urge to be—

/

We've died a thousand times and continue—

/

The scent of Formaldehyde dripped into lungs, suffocating—

/

Cradle the brains of animals in hands not stained with their blood.

/

Squeeze the vision from my occipital lobe and infuse it with every memory I can  
no longer see.

/

Spinal cord severed, vertebrae sewn with Elm root.

/

Tendrils around my neck, Morning Glory my noose.

/

Cries bubble from keyholes, drip and stain the carpet

/

They lock their free spirits behind manicured suits and ties

/

She whispered Sarin, like a siren's song

## Anatomy of Decomposing

Meteors drip from the sky  
like mist soaked wisteria blooms aching for soil  
hanging heavy, like fruit.

I am a bee,  
knees soaked in honey  
crusted with sweet,  
dream caught in the sap  
oozing between moss covered bark  
coagulated a scab an amalgam of decomposing.

And the spider weaves lips shut,  
and the wind ceases to blather  
mocked by the song echoed down roads before dawn.

I've collapsed under the weight of raindrops,  
welcomed them to explore my scalp between shafts of hair.  
I've dug fingertips in mud grasping for something solid.  
The worms crawl through my roots  
and the earth unforgiving  
needles the stem of a dahlia through  
my Cerebellum my Arbor Vitea  
to bloom in my mouth;  
petals for plucking,  
teeth for pulling.

*You love me not*  
*You love me*



## October on Danford Creek

The detectives had faces  
fashioned like rose quartz. Pounding  
with rubber mallet fists  
on empty apartment doors.

I watched them, fish lens, through the peep-  
hole, shoving a single business card in the frame near the brassy knob  
whispering billingsgate, peaking in windows, pressing  
soggy leaves into the “welcome” mat with their shiny shoes.

\*

October mornings are shallow clouds grey  
and drag their belly’s low. Drains clogged by leaf  
patties, wet roads momentarily remember the print  
of tires                      then forgotten by mist glaze.

\*

It never fails, dog sees  
squirrel, chipmunk, toad, dog, human  
and charges, face first, into a saliva smeared slider.  
Vertical blinds like rotting teeth, missing 2, 3, dirty and yellowed.

Every gust scooted leaf is a toad and every scraping  
of dry leaves on concrete, a squirrel.  
October is a dumb dog, a companion  
when the thunder shakes the house.

\*

The pea coats knocked my door with unsatisfied knuckles.  
Badges on leashes,  
always lunging—  
untrained dogs.

I like my neighbors,  
murder suspects or not.              Neighbors  
don’t need fences, just unexpected  
cookies and a pseudo-sincere, *Hey...*

## Wing Bone

I tied her scapulae together  
by wrapping copper wire around the coracoid process  
like the orange spiral around healing stone jewelry.  
Acromion tapping acromion  
as I tested the metal joint,  
like a pen on a desk in a cement room,  
a hollowing density.  
Forefinger finding comfort in the bloodless veins  
of the infraspinous fossa  
where my black would be painted  
if I were small enough to cocoon myself  
in the glenoid cavity—  
fly away a monarch.

## Taxidermy

The radio was whispering advertisements when I pulled up to the apartment complex. Sis was smoking a cigarette at the weather abused picnic tables. She skipped to the car, her hair skipping out of sync with her, purse flopping about.

“Did you hear?” Her buckteeth protruded out of a smile and before I could even think of what she was referring to she continued, “Jack White finally bought a house in Kalamazoo, its fate, KayDee!”

“Oh yeah?”

“Do you want to drive by his house? I have the address!”

“Nope...”

“You’re right, I should get him a gift first.” She buckled herself in and took a breath. The kind of breath that in Disney movies meant she was completely in love, head-over-heals in love.

Not too long ago she was in love with Seth MacFarlane. Her phone background was a pixelated headshot of him. She’d talk to him occasionally as if he were on the phone and would discreetly caress his face when she thought I wasn’t looking. After Seth was Kurt Cobain. Her love for him was memorizing his life story and weaving herself into it.

“I have to get him a really good gift or else he won’t go on a date with me.” She jotted notes on the back of a receipt she found in the median of my car.

Her thoughts were an acid trip. They were irrational, scary at times, and to her, always epiphanic, to me they were cacophonous. She used to be the stereotypical good-girl-gone-bad but after meth replaced alcohol she started to display schizophrenic thought processes and they only got worse after she stopped smoking dope and worst after she stopped taking her Adderall. Too afraid they would lock her away, arms crossed over her chest, she never sought help.

She read a list of gift idea aloud as they came to mind and were written down. “A bagpipe...a puppy...a big cross, like the ones on churches...a neon light of the number three...a black and yellow, upholstered, Victorian-looking chair...taxidermy...”

“Stop, you’re hurting my head.”

“I should get him taxidermy! He has an elephant head already.”

I pulled into a café and waited in the car so Sis could get some food and coffee. She’s been living off of unemployment for 5 months collecting as much as I earn working 30 hours a week. Honestly, I was a little envious. 29 and ready to retire but checking out early... sounds so suicidal.

“What do you call those rabbit hybrid things?” she asked while shuffling back into the passenger seat.

“A Jackalope?”

“Where can I find one of those?”

I didn't say anything, just smiled while she Googled 'Where do Jackalopes live'. "Why don't you just kill some squirrels and call it good?"

"Squirrels aren't special, Jack White has an ELEPHANT HEAD!"

"So kill two and fashion the one with the other one's skull... Hamlet style." She looked confused so I continued, "To be or not to be?"

"That is the question" she replied in her deepest voice. "I can put antlers on them!"