

WHAT IS THE BODY?

by

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The passage to maturity made me witness unwillingly hair hatching from each pore-shell on my boyish skin. The density of hair created a fur canopy that alienated me from the category belonging to mainstream gay culture in which I had placed myself condemningly. It wasn't long before I prayed as an impotent believer and felt inferior in relation to mass production models, seeds of corporate metrosexuality, rival figures in the game of reverence and envy. A modern-day Sampson in reverse, whose powers diminished as body hair spread over the uncultivated land of mine.

I wasn't living; I was aimlessly wandering with a sense of deprivation, until I decided to pour petroleum drizzle onto the fading flame of hope. An impulse of surrender rather than a conscious choice. I reached for Delilah, patron saint of conformity, mistress of obedience. The curse of being blessed with the female sex or identifying with the unjustly mirrored gender does not necessarily mean you're gonna grow feminist fangs. A cunning woman exercising patriarchal practices is equally guilty as a male servant offering a standing ovation at the altar of the phallus. However, her case is not to be distributed for generalization purposes. Just an exemplar of profit-ravenous vultures pecking at larvae's insecurities.

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Two days later. My appointment is set at two o'clock sharp. I arrive at the beauty parlor almost precisely. I attempt to comfort myself in the last available seat. My bristly calves are juxtaposed with three pairs of crossed sleek legs. It's like I have landed in a parallel universe where matriarchy is possible. A door opens and Delilah makes her cameo appearance examining the row of vain patients. She looks at me and exclaims vibrantly, "Oh, it's a boy!" as if I wasn't embarrassed enough. "It's your turn," she remarks, pointing towards the waxing room.

Polished tools furnishing the spotless counter. Cotton apron adjusted, latex gloves stretched for hygiene preservation. I lie on the operating table, eyes barred, the rest of the senses bare to the imminent assault. Feverish wax is fired to stick a pink mosaic on my chest. Black leather strips are hired to wreck the consistency of my sentimental skin. With each detachment of a strip, muffled screeches are released. "Don't tell me it hurts," Delilah sneers, as her eyebrow feigns an arch of sarcasm. My suppressed punch is smoothed by a snobbish "No." Her vengeful gaze steers the restless movements of her hands valorizing the pain they inflict. Foul rose blood oozes out of the peaks of volcanic pores. Teardrops of regret wash my body sour. I try to resist. But there is no safe word to caress the torture. Thus, I remain stoical consumer perspiring obsessed for his reward. The forestal areas of my torso begin to melt into fertile soil, forming gradually the silk states of my anatomy. Ache slowly sinks. Its progressive shipwreck causes the buoy of tranquility to emerge on the surface water of emotion. Thrilled at the successful completion of the operation, I pay the corresponding fee and walk pacified out of this room knowing that I am rid of its sterile odor for at least some time.

One week is required to soothe the irritation that follows, effect-shot in the sequence of waxing. As soon as I'm left alone, I cannot restrain myself from performing a lingering undressing in front of the fetishized lens of the mirror. Unexpectedly, I become aware that the lovely body I observe is analogous to the flawless sculptures found in pornographic pulps that I used to peep at during the vilest hours of my pubescence. Quivers of potential shake riotously the recently transformed reflection. An overflowing urge dictates my body to solace itself into rhythmic arms of celebration. By blocking useless thoughts that would delay the consequent action, I buy immediately one ticket for The Black Madonna. Naked as I stand, I move towards the bathtub to initiate a ritualized preparation for my big exit.

Around midnight, I feel it's time to take a break from the windowless walls of introspection and make contact with the world outside. Equipped with a lush wreath of virulent berries, obsidian vinyl shorts and bulky boots embellished with a depiction of Bosch's *Earthly Delights*, I walk pensively towards St. Catherine. An abandoned medieval chapel now rented as a space of aesthetic value for organizing Boiler Room events. As I stroll, I inspect the industrial landscape of the city and inquire its relation to tough human nature; how the naturalistic curves of Art Nouveau were forged into the straight lines of Art Deco, introducing hence the prevalence of opulent capitalism. The wind of this solitary brainstorm blows my inert hand close to my impatient mouth. I swallow thirstily a purple molly, synthetic blood and bread for tonight's festive Communion.

I step into the sacred place and the heavy bass emitted from a professional sound system instantly manipulates my tentative posture. The Black Madonna plays deliriously techno chants intoxicating with her fervor a bunch of ardent ravers. I'm compelled to sway lasciviously. Cautiously, I stretch temporary corridors to pass through the array of these living voodoo dolls in order to reach the glorified DJ set. There, I anticipate nervously the familiar effect, when a queer radiance penetrates my aura. My curious gaze turns submissively to confront the instinctive movements of a dancing creature. I notice the dusty fingertips of a craftsman's hand. They reveal the eagerness with which he knitted the copper lacework that now decorates his furry trunk. Freelance hustler of the artistic spectrum. The moment he stares back, we perceive a mutual understanding; we speak the same wordless body language that longs eternally. He grabs me by the hand, uttering,

“Let's ride.”

“Sure.”

As I follow him readily, he turns and mutters, “I have to tell you something first.”

Drenched with concern.

“Once I was a girl.”

Sigh of relief; “Yes, I also enjoy travelling from one gender to another from time to time.”

Correction; “No, I'm talking about sex. I have undergone several surgical operations. Except one. The one related to my genitalia.”

Nod of empathy; “Fine with me.”

He took my hand again in a clasp of happiness. Continuing our enclosed course, he led us to the gates of a dimly sensual Underworld. A darkroom where nightfall is corrupted only by faint scarlet tints. Red neon lights brush the holograms of libidinous bodies, volunteers to a mystical society whose absolute value is hedonism. Guarded behind his back, my flaming eyes draw a semicircle to appraise the sexual activity displayed in the chamber. They are capable of catching mere glimpses of fragmented obscenities; a disembodied hand curled

firmly around an unapologetic cock; a devouring mouth bruising an enlarged pierced nipple; split-open buttocks on a leather swing awaiting to get fisted. The distinct parts of a lover melt into wet dreams of another. A hardly visual, yet amply palpable experience. No wonder the starved spirits of antiquity used to pay an entrance fee to indulge in the incarnated reveries of Hades' abyss.

We move towards the heart of this lustful chorus. Abruptly, I thrust him on the floor, his back facing the coldness of dirty tiles. Grateful, he stretches out his limbs in order to accept me into his warm embrace. The moment our tongues collide, the chemistry lurking in the plasma of my vessels explodes in a fountain of frenzy. My pupils dilate becoming two black suns that eclipse the seductiveness of brown irises. Bestial energy takes over. I begin sucking at his tingling throat. He pulls my hair in response. I spit nastily on his face. He offers handily a slap, leaving a brutish imprint on my cheek. I break his legs apart. Overwhelmed by his exaggerated vulva, I cast down my shorts and cascade an ocean of amorous redemption over his body. United, we oscillate steadily according to the throbbing beats that echo from the nave. Precum drips, licking our thighs. My needy presence in this world finds refuge in this condomless manifestation of desire. Touch is the ultimate sense. His skin, lips, and loins acquire a devilish quality. Never gonna wash him out of me. Suddenly, I grasp the delicate gags of a fragile twink. They resonate as enticing moans of a nymphomaniac siren. Then, I discern the coarse sighs of a jockstrapped daddy. They become the slobbery groans of an enchanted satyr. The intensity of the sounds merges with the electronic dissonance to produce a harsh rhapsodic symphony. Sex disperses everywhere. Sex stripped of prejudice. Sex free of borders. Back and forth, in and out of focus, I taste him relentlessly. Saliva and sweat titillate my palate. Exhilaration sinks into my viscera, as if they had open wounds.

The second he commands, "Lick my legs, I'm on fire!" the rest of the sex practitioners direct their contagious psychosis towards us. Our shameless friction attracts the lewd connections in their brains. Hypnotized, they crave to approach us. Their erect bodies bend as they assume the shapes of crawling serpents. They slither on the floor whispering defiled hissings with their mutilated tongues. They coil around our holy union unfolding a panting spiral that keeps revolving to eternity. A carnal pattern of simultaneous pleasure that places us at its cosmic center. Remnants of the icons that used to inhabit the dungeon of the chapel shed acrylic tears in a protest against the liberating transcendence. The exaltation of our souls through physical satisfaction culminates in an orgasmic consummation; the separate bodies fuse, clouding thus any individuality. They form the unified silhouette of a snake that digests the fruit of knowledge. As the subversive Dionysian spree proceeds frantically, the viper casts its skin. It unveils an amphibious entity that bares both female and male organs and their respective impact. S/he is baptized "Hermaphroditus."

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My body has become a temple that offers home to disparate dwellers. Although its sensory holes have always been open to unprecedented dicks, its monumental content has remained hermetically silent for fear of honest familiarity. But now, I share with all these people a mutual coexistence displayed on a homogeneous appearance; people I might have liked, loved or loathed; admired or envied; desired or ignored. For the first time, my procrastinating predilection is ready to entrust more than a rectal aperture. To finally understand the real meaning of compassion. I will mentally kiss your mauled hand as an indication of sympathy, because your thoughts are my reflection, your feelings my vision, your pain my own suffering. As much as I am yours, you are equally mine in a way that is not possessive. The recognition of our inevitable belonging establishes an indestructible bond of togetherness. A

chain consisting of diverse voices whose dialogue is expressed through the vocal cords of a single human being. Hence, the stealth debaters decide to adopt the personal pronoun “I” instead of inducing frustration with its plural form.

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One day, I wake up to realize that hair has sprouted lavishly again on the arid fields of the flesh. This time the agrarian growth is accompanied by a severe infection. A thousand newborn pimples filled with pus now clog the sickened crannies through which floccose flora bursts suffusedly. Repulsed, I take a scarce look into the crystal waters of the mirror. The impression of ugliness is unavoidable; trashed savannah skin covered with untrodden mines brings me back to a desolate pre-Delilah state. Uncontrollably I start yelling, “What the fuck is the body?” Whipping myself whether reconciliation with it is possible. Some of the voices, retaining their calmness, cooperate in an attempt to offer internal consolation. “Relax! It’s a curable condition,” they reasonably ascertain hoping that I’ll recover my calmness. Yet, our trembling uterus is already taking trips, moving constantly up and down, from its structural nest to the choking throat and conversely. Hysterical madness is always the miserable rebel who triumphs in the concentration camp of emotions. The horror!

With a sudden scream I smash
the beggar idol reflected
and run away from my house
like spit out my mouth

Dazed
I stumble in the streets
Dazzled
I spin
until I spot
the vulgar colony of beauty commerce

There,
I thrust myself against its diamond facade
The splinters of the glass
scar my raging face
Blood floods
over the wounded cheeks
down the shampoo samples

Now that I’ve ruined the narcissist surface
let’s see
what a life
would mean
aside this hopeless wrapping

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The conceptual conception of “What Is the Body?” occurred as an instinctual impulse, which did not include initially any points of reference to ancient Greek mythology. However, as I kept writing, I became increasingly aware that certain contemporary affairs could be symbolized archetypically by mythical figures. Hence, gender fluidity is represented miraculously by Hermaphroditus who reveals the multiplicity permeating one’s sexual and overall identity. Relentless hedonism taking place within the context of rave culture is substituted dazingly by Dionysus. The tendency to romanticize darkness and regard it as an intriguing mystery is signified by allusions to Hades. The interchangeable dynamic between male and female power is resentfully depicted by the relationship that links Sampson and Delilah. The subversion of traditionally entrenched myths was a creative challenge, yet a joyful one that made the content of the story more relatable. The mythological tales along with personal concerns, past experiences, and overwhelming feelings summoned the muse of inspiration. Untamed imagination, novels, visuals, and music shaped rather unconsciously my peculiar aesthetic. The profusion of these influences urged me to begin the written quest of acknowledging what the body is.