

PRETTY.

By Matthew A. Michelangelo

It's only when the lights dim
And my body shrinks into a lens,
That I am beautiful. Though never
When the day is full, and I am bare.
I am only hot when
Your hands are tangled in my hair.
I am only worth your attention while on
My knees, entertaining your phallic esteem.

I am only handsome—until you vanish,
Drained and pleased. Cockroach.
A bedbug biting me up with,
“Hey, sexy. I missed ya.” Longing for my clean sheets.
Yearning to infest my insides again, similarly.

We gays learn it young and quick.
Being attractive only exists embedded in a link
Illuminated by blue light for a stranger's lustful gleam.
Compliments dissipate like summer rain
Like a slim, smooth body, or
An innocent smile on the face.
Even now, Love only comes pillow-deep.
Hopeless love is desirable, so the condom may sneak.

I'm only handsome
When it's your sap I seep,
I'm only worth a damn to hold
Not to keep. I'm only pretty
When you need to blow off steam.

Bedside Confession

By Matthew A. Michelangelo

I want to tell you something, please?

Cross your heart,

It stays between us and

These purple sheets?

Something was taken from me.

So now I don't wanna have sleepovers no more.

So now I jump when you sneak up on me for a hug.

I pinky promise, I like you, but my body feels mean.

No, please listen, the monsters—

They don't always stay under the bed

Trust me, you're not strong enough

To fight them off.

You might conspire

With them, when I speak sharply.

For some reason,

I keep upsetting everyone.

No! You won't understand—

Your parents still smile at you.

I think mine realized I'm bad fruit.

So, believe me when I say, you will never know.

Yes, we are old enough to touch like that,

But I still disappear when your hand slips

Above my hemline. I thought I wanted it there,

I'm sorry, it's not fair, but don't hold me like that.

I'm sorry. I snapped, Are you mad?

Please don't be mad at me.

I do love you, cross your heart

Throw away the key.

Polar Eyes

By Matthew A. Michelangelo

I don't know why you vandalize pretty things. You are not feral.
I don't know why I bite back so viciously. I'm not a rabid beast.

Can you speak, or are you in rigor mortis? Tell me why you think it is cruel to recall our memories now? "Weaponizing us," as you preach. Well, my love, I disagree. Answer me this, quickly: Who the hell mistakes happily reciprocated moments for a psychological warzone? What type of person believes that's the intention of warm-blooded love? You must truly have gone reptilian on me. I'll give you the benefit of the doubt and admit I don't always know how to apologize for being mean. Certainly, not after you were about half a foot deep in me, no matter how aloofly. How is it that I still think your body's heat is superior when it can't even warm you up affectively.

What a divinely absurd comedy, really. Am I expected to thaw this treachery, oh so lovingly? Well then, wouldn't I be another fool frozen, phonetically? I cannot give another apology. Nothing I say melts your arctic demeanor. Frostbite has atrophied your tongue. Do ice burns still cover your shoulders? Is the damage of us still sustained after all these years? I cannot believe it. To think, you still swear up and down, holier than thou, as true as glaciers freeze, that it is just me who won't let it go. Well, truth be told, I won't. Because I tricked myself into believing your frigidity was a miracle to bear, branded on my lower back with your DNA, like fire scarring wood. Laughable now, that it is I who needs to end this Cold War. How? When you can't even entertain the thought of "I'm Sorry" forming vapor from your mouth. When you refuse to admit you preserved me in your polar eyes, cold as ice, Warm as death, every single night.

My love, I cannot forgive, nor can I forget, how you won't forgive or forget yourself for leaving me so coldly, for how you keep me—
Polarized in your mind.