

Dear Past Lover,

I won't let you pluck a bar from a jail cell and wield it into a ring for me, to enclose around my finger like you enclose upon my life. Cast your gaze to your friends when you're in their company, look at what you chose over a loving life. People who would sooner appease their partners or themselves; how empty it must be. I've detailed how my experience of the world has been colored with a shade you just can't see, an ineffable tinge of the worst hue. One that morphes street corners to an executioner's block. A tone that reveals looks of disdain and malice behind a smile so grotesque. You punish me for my visions just because I see when you are blind. Their words weigh down on my spirit like bricks around a witch's ankle. 'If she sinks she's guilty'. Banished outside of the walls of your lost city of empathy— a place I forged with you.

I told you everything you needed to know all the fine details of those sick memories. All the roles I have been casted in, yet somehow always get credited as a victim as the credits roll. The role of a school child of age 8 who was subjected to horrors at the hands of an older boy, the perfect daughter getting ignored for punishment takes the prize, the loving girlfriend who offered respite in the storm but was called a whore nevertheless. I struggle to hold myself up under the architecture of these archetypes like Atlas. I thought you would shoulder my burden, lover? But you let them pick at my carcass like vultures; as flies buried their larvae in my flesh. My screams are drowned out by your rational mind- how peaceful it must be. I wish I lived in a world ruled by the norms you are afforded, but I exist as bait, target and scapegoat. How far can a stubborn creature go when they lay lame on the hillside?

I lose the battle against my body every time. Perhaps my manly calves can help me hold up your expectations, the boys in chemistry thought they were a drawback to my form when rating it out of ten- perhaps it could be a positive after all. My self concept becomes so distorted; who am I if I am always lesser? My skin is not mine but do I own what is below the surface? Why do I feel a little hollow lover? Am I meant to feel overwhelmed to the point of meltdown in your company and grey in your absence? After all this breeding and beating you've finally got it into me.

I can drag my body to my own conclusions but I can't stomach the truth. I'll never feel loved because respect is intertwined in the intricacies of the concept. I will be dragged down to the lowest level of caste every time to feel your disdain. I'll disguise it as love every time because I'm so desperate for the warmth I'll never feel. Bed sheets in the winter that won't warm to touch, a new moon cursed girl forced into the shade. A dapple grey nag at the water's edge, with its reigns being tugged with such force. Half baked lover I thought I could mold your clay form. My hands are scarred, I didn't understand

your form had set in its genesis, now immortalised in its incompleteness. Take your ring, watch me sink, release my reins, and leave my cold body to rot. Perhaps I'll roll the orb off my back and when my mind falls silent I'll see it's all going to be ok.