

recidivism

by andrea jefferson

WHY WE LIKE IT: *'The tendency to reoffend' is ironically and beautifully played out in this moving flash monologue that hits all the right keys. We like the subtle circularity of the story's structure, the transactional use of POV from second to first person and back and the cautionary tone behind the sometimes imperative voice that carries the weight of a morality tale. In fewer than 600 words it's nothing less, to use Hemingway's term, than 'grace under pressure.' Two thumbs up.*

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Do you remember as a kid that one scar? The one that made things different? Made you realize maybe hopscotch *is* a little dangerous or that mom's right about jumping on the bed--fuck whatever those monkeys were on. Remove that scar from its locale, press it firmly against your face, and stretch it from your left ear to your right eye. Be called "ScarfaceScarScarry" and their innumerable variations through grade school. Be tempted to tell how you got it to induce pity. Don't.

Fuck one guy from sophomore to senior year because it's a small town and female sex outside of a committed relationship gets you talked about. Dump him at his graduation dinner

because you lost interest the summer before junior year when he felt you up outside a Waffle House. Without your permission. Don't have a baby like Samantha Rollins and her entire clique. Graduate early and go to design school. Work at Starbucks until the video of you rolling around with Sully, your cat, goes viral on Facebook.

See that popularity roll over onto Instagram and Twitter. Make more videos like it. Be praised, not only for your cat ownership but for your face the first time in your life.

Beautiful!!! would love 2 cum for u such a inspiration! #goals

Spend the next three months toning everything your body allows to tone. Show off to your supporters [and non-supporters]. Be loved by them, envied by them, scrutinized by them. Have brands shell out money for your endorsements: from foundation to kitty litter. Use your proceeds to finally, finally fix your face because no matter how much virtual adoration you acquire, that doesn't stop children's stares in Costco or the fear of approaching people.

A week post-op after only sharing older photos to all your feeds, finally announce the news. Tell the people that got you out of Starbucks and will swallow any pill or drink any powder you tell them to how you finally look the way you feel. Watch the comments go from generally muddled to staunchly reproached.

Wow. and not in the good way plastic bitch Fake. No self-love

Lose your endorsements because your scarless face doesn't prove any points. Your scarless face inspires no one. After a few of your breakdown live videos go viral, be called a crackhead, clout chaser, and tired act. Take a breather from socials to job hunt. Have trouble finding one due to your limited work experience and abrupt resignation from Starbucks. Cry. Cry. Cry.

After a relentless and awful day that began with bleaching your favorite shirt and ended with your weed dealer getting busted, finally log back into your socials. Notice your follower counts no longer have six figures on any platform. Why? Why? Why? Scroll through enough comments to make your stomach mangle within itself. Ponder how self-improvement could be so devastating. Finally, sit in front of the mirror and touch the ghost of your scar. Feel nothing but smooth skin. Then, without an ounce of hesitation, get up and look in the mirror. Realize the people want what they want, and it's no longer you. Go under the knife, this time in the comfort of your own kitchen. Start at your left ear, and make a new laceration into dominion.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *'recidivism' is a critique on how social media can be a safe haven and simultaneously a disease. It also serves as a cautionary tale to not confuse your desires with others' expectations. I've found that I appreciate reading narration that feels very honest and objective, so that's what I aim for as a narrator in pieces that aren't first person.*

BIO: *Andrea Jefferson is an author residing in Southern Louisiana with her lover and kitten. Her work has been featured in Eunoia Review, Bridge, Bending Genres, littledeathlit mag, trampset and others. She writes between Wal-Mart shifts and existential crises. Find the author on Twitter @honeydreee*