

We get so hung up on the body

We change a small part of it, and immediately parents get taken aback, managers jest in an utterly inconfident attempt to make you a more presentable set-piece for the customers. I cannot shave my legs, *it's not natural*, but my mother shaves her legs? I wear eyeliner, *there's always so much going on with you*. I would rather die than tell my mother what I wore to homecoming.

Why do you not fuss over the music I play?

Why do you not fuss over the posters in my bedroom?

Why don't you give a damn about my phone background?

This body can't be mine. I didn't get to decide to have this voice, nor did I get to decide how it would categorize me in the endless onslaught of social capture. Eight hours a day the position and action of this body is dictated by company procedures written by men I've never met before. For the first 14 years of my life presentations inscribed onto this body which would form the perceived identity that others in my life will forever use to run social calculations on me were inscribed by hands that were not my own.

I am told to cut my hair. I can no longer look in the mirror. This body can't be mine. I am less scared to decorate my room than I am to wear the clothes that I want. What is so special about this body? I am told that swift changes belie problems, but the identity he perceives that I have changed from was built excruciatingly slowly, yet it produced more problems than I can possibly count.

I just don't get it.

Where do we draw the line at what constitutes my body? Where is the line between inside and outside? My wills reside in my mind, and while they are modulated by electrical and chemical impulses derived from that which is called my body, so too does everything else modulate my mind. Even that which I conveniently label my self, that interconnected mesh of desires and wills to certain affects, is more fragmented than we would all like to admit. The process of removing myself from the subconscious cages of Empire has been a process of battling what would be called part of my own psyche. *I isn't an other* — it's a fiction. A fiction thrown over an *immanent* conflict:

loose phenomena
of different wills
whose own Will to Power reaches

everywhere with many varying intensities,

what could I call my body?

What's so special about this body? Is my room not as much of an extension of my wills as this body is, if not moreso? After all, my room isn't owned by a company or a school for certain times of day. I have more opportunity to freely exert change over my room than I do my own body. You could say my body gives me the material force to act upon the world, but capital exerts more action than any human body could. If capital is the action of human bodies, for capital — then human biomass constitutes *the body of capital*. Perhaps that's why my body isn't *free*. *Perhaps my body isn't a body*.

In the bathroom, waiting for the shower to warm, my boyfriend stands beside me, both of us nude. We hold each other with the gentle white noise of the running water behind us. I look at what would otherwise be his body, he looks at what would otherwise be mine. We rock back and forth standing on the tile. In the mirror, I look at what would otherwise be my body, and I cannot help but think, *this body can't be mine, this feeling could not be only my own*.

I feel the entire universe all at once.

I know there can be no inside, and there can be no outside. Love could not possibly course throughout all that is if there was. What I feel, this overwhelming innocence of living, this feeling of connectedness and compassion for all the trees and stars and galaxies is far too powerful to be the experience of a single body within an alien universe. The universe acts through me, and I through the universe. This body can't be mine. The universe is not just its own.

A Life acts through me, and I through a Life. The embers of this wretched Empire which would embody me, which would ever wish to tell me that this body is mine, they will not be watched by a lone subject protecting Life like a benevolent master. Those embers will be brought about and witnessed by a living force acting to reproduce itself. There will be no terms to negotiate, no Paris Treaty; a Life makes neither excuses nor justifications for its own existence.

When our time comes we will not make excuses for the terror.

When our time comes we will need no reasons to love.