WHY I EAT

Why I Eat

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when the discomfts of our skins are so hard to live in
we want to leave cities;
plant ourselves in sidewalk cracks
that are unfamiliar to us,
find clarity in not knowing anything:
we want to be invisible.

because for a moment invisible feels invincible;
if no one can touch me
maybe the bruises can heal long enough
to forget the punches.

anxiety is the war formed in my body
it's my mind trying so desperately to form fetal positions
but these layers feel so thick
they were suffocating my skeleton
and that's always how it started.

no one's bones need to breathe
but it felt so good to swallow oxygen,
fill voided emotions with nothingness:
I wanted to be invisible.

but moving cities was impossible
so I made an island of my body instead
cultivated sickness, substituted loneliness for calorie obsession.

I got so good at math those years
I was eating numbers and forgetting words
finding comfort in hunger, happiness in skinny compliments
dancing my way to washrooms, choking my esophagus
because when the burn in the back of your throat feels like accomplishment,
nothing that hurt you hurts anymore.

my mother used to grip my love handles so hard she squeezed disgrace into them
and I found motivation in that every time I mounted the treadmill
I reminded myself of that time I was plated an extra piece of lasagne
and got yelled at,

Or all the times people made a point of calling out my baby fat
Or the time my aunt told me to remove my wisdoms to make my cheeks flat
I was so inspired to disappear
I didn’t want any inches of this body to be noticed
Clothes were supposed to fit loosely like blankets
So I planned to make forts and hide in them.

at ten years old
I dreamt of the day I could afford cosmetic surgery
I thought,
"God must have arranged my face wrong"
because I barely felt like a human being
but no one that young should take comfort in incisions
what is the impulse in telling young women
their bodies will only be as good as men want them?

I didn’t even feel worthy of makeup until I was 18
but body dysmorphia had its grips on so strong
it was too late.
by the time more trauma hit my plate
I arranged it in carrot sticks,
treated myself to ranch dip on a good day
But I swished that shit around in my mouth for so long
until it tasted like shame
I was shameful
for existing.

And I wish I could tell you it was over
But I don’t think it ever escapes you
Nothing tastes as sweet
As skinny did
because even when skinny hurts,
people commend your commitment

we keep screaming: “live fast and die young”
as if coffins were made to sleep in
as if we’re seeking pretty…
in an open casket.

But 6 years gone by,
and my body still asks me
why I hurt it so bad…

And I don’t have an answer
So I eat now

To apologize.