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Anatomy: The Makings of Me

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A N A T O M Y

T h e m a k i n g s o f m e



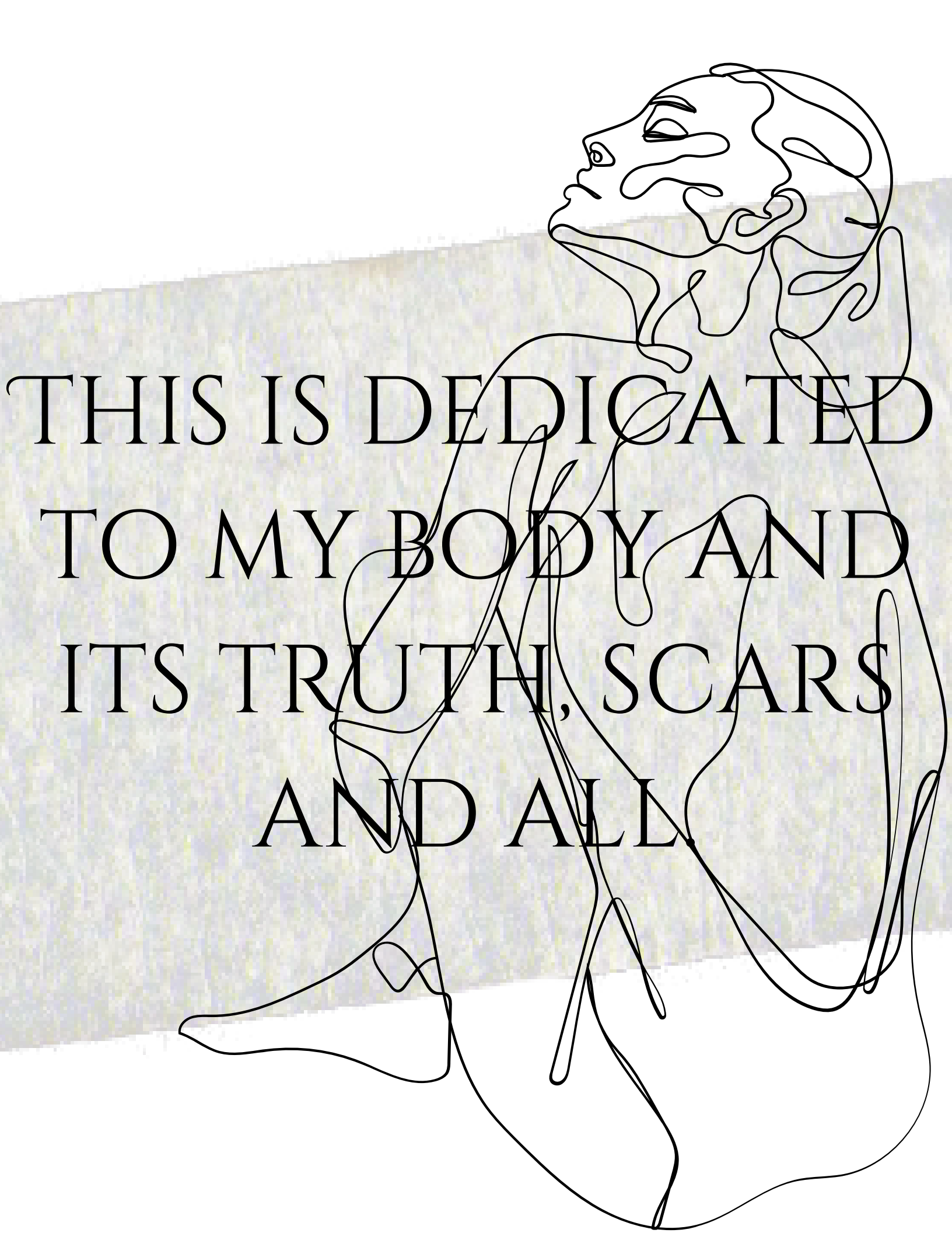
Watch me pick my pieces off the floor and put myself back
together.

SPRING 2022



is a college student at Augustana College and hopes to one day inspire the world with her words. She hopes you enjoy this collection of writings and that in doing so, it opens your mind to your own self. There is so much power to be gained in self-love.

The parts that make us who we are, are worth celebrating and acknowledging and that's a beautiful thing.



THIS IS DEDICATED
TO MY BODY AND
ITS TRUTH, SCARS
AND ALL.

The Body: A Foreword

When I was a child, I didn't worry about anything. Not about the way I walked, or dressed or the hobbies I held. I was just me. But as I have gone throughout my life thus far, I would be lying if I said if it wasn't difficult for me to find my body desirable and healthy when the world has done all it can to put obstacles in my path. When tasked with this project, I thought a lot about what experiences from my personal life can I bring forth into a project while promoting the topic of self-love and body positivity. Which is incredibly hard for so many. Not only myself but also the one's I love. I hope you can take away something from these words of mine and use them at the very least, knowing you aren't alone in your feelings or experiences.

I want to thank a few people who have inspired me, in the case that this can become an official publication someday. To my teachers who encouraged me to dream big, to my family and friends who have shown me love to no end, my partner Tyler who took majority of the photos in this book, and to the Midwest Writing Center for being my gateway into my improvements on a writer, I hope you love this book, as much as I've enjoyed putting it together!

Much Love, <3



I'm Still a Woman

I'm still a woman.

More than that, I'm a force. One of iron will and strength of heart and mind. I've spent years pretending to be fine with the expanse of matter that makes me.

Just because I don't fit society's ideals, doesn't mean I don't feel. Feel that,

I'm still a woman.

Not a waste of space, no matter how my overthinking brain often tries to drain every last bit of joy from my veins. That my crystalline tears from yet another anxiety attack are just me being "hormonal". That I should suck it up because only weak people cry, so wipe the damn tears away. Taught to pretend that I'm always okay, but I'm not always okay. My tears aren't asking for sympathy, they just wish to be validated.

I'm still a woman

My blood is honey, like the taste of my lips. My lips, the taste of empowerment. Sweet with a kick because I don't give a fuck about labels and the binary. I don't give a fuck about your policing of my rights and body. I don't give a fuck about what society wants me to give a fuck about I will speak my views to whoever cares to challenge them, but I will do so politely and with respect. However, don't take that as a sign to talk over me. I will raise my voice louder with a "I am not finished." and you can sit there and wait your turn.

I'm still a woman.

One that still gets judged simply for existing. As if my existence isn't difficult enough with the weights of mountains on me. Despite being older and questionably wiser, I still feel at times I am cracking. That one day my soul resilient going to break down one last time and I'm not going to have the strength to repair it.

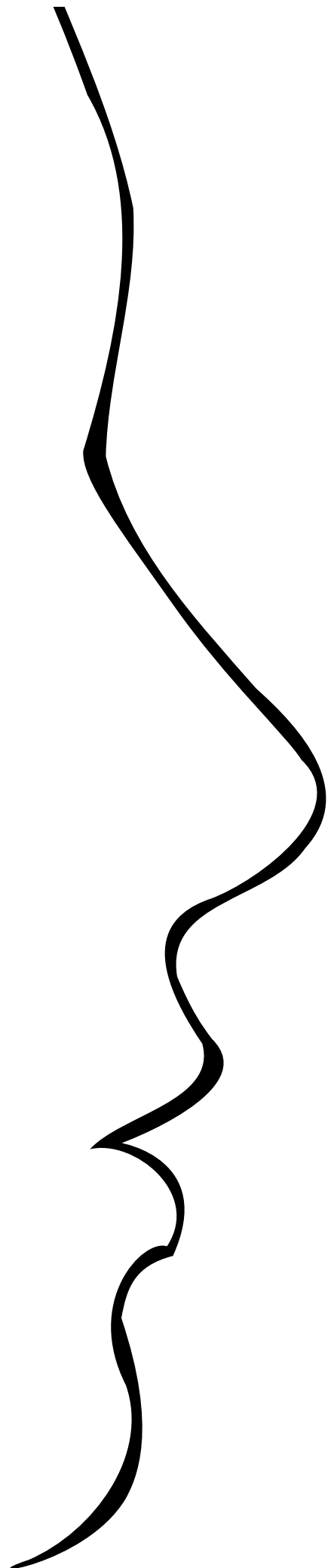
I'm still a woman

I am still afraid to walk alone, go to events alone, do anything alone. Because even though I've trained in self-defense the world still favors people who wish to do me harm just because they think the world owes it to them. Because of what I wear, or how vulnerable the wolves of the streets think I am. I worry for the world my future children will grow up in. But I also feel inspired because perhaps my generation will be the change the world needs.

**I'm still a woman
This is my war cry**



Face
Look and see how bold
the contours of skin can be
She is a beauty



Lips

Sensitive, yet strong

Able to bring forth my voice, bring forth comfort from my lover. Despite being bitten in fits of nervous anxiety they bring forth power, passion, and sweetness. Chapstick can moisturize but not cover up my need for attention. The need and want for action and words to roll out from my tongue.

Freely unashamed



Voice

I wish my voice was not one that shakes and stammers when I'm trying to make my voice heard. I wish that I could shout from the rooftops without being embarrassed. I wish I could say what needs to be said and let them know that my voice is not dead.

Silent. Nothing but silence.

So I'll pick up a pencil, or type out my words. For there's fire in them that world just needs to see, to hear, even if it's not escaping my own lips. Rather it is being read, being shared across writers, dreamers, thinkers, people. People who can keep something of my voice inside themselves or even find a hidden part of who they are and bring it back into the surface area.



Smile

You can always tell when I'm faking my emotions. I flash my teeth and overcompensate, but my annoyance reigns true. But in a candid moment, you call me beautiful. Not many people have genuinely called me beautiful. Of all the people and things in the world, you saw me and something worth pursuing. Something worth smiling about. I went through a dark period where it was hard to smile. I didn't find any rays of golden light. Until you came along and brought the sunshine. Until I found my place and found my ways to heal. Now my smile appears more frequently knowing that you are spending time here with me.

Specs

My eyes are the color of cliches in love songs....Blue like the ocean or the skies. I never wanted glasses. I was borderline for years until my constant headaches weren't migraines but literal sight issues. But when I first put them on the world was shiny and new. Blurs that would take squinting to see became visible to me. Faces came alive with high definition. I could see the contours of faces and the textures of life. Plus I'm told they really bring out my eyes. Blue-green-grey? I don't get the chance to see how I truly appear unless I'm looking at reflections or selfies. But I do wish to know what others can see. Do they see life blurred or HD? Do they need a new view?
I don't know but I'm quite enjoying mine.



Hair

My mane is flowing wild and free unbothered by your thoughts of it. When salons closed for 2 years I grew it out. But I'll be honest with you, long hair is a pain in the ass. It tangles, hard to style and if your me the thickness means it takes forever to dry. But honestly it's fine because it beats the constant insults I got from my own short cut. That wasn't even that bad, but the constant misgendering and assumptions about my sexuality and gender just drained. IT'S JUST HAIR. I want to go back in time to tell my young self that.





FORM

I am a wild force
Built to survive fully
In this crazy life

Longlegs:

Written summer 2019

She snares me in a web with her
awkward question.

"Do you have a boyfriend?"

I laugh and slowly attempt to
escape.

I dust myself off thinking I'm free.

"I just thought with those gorgeous
long legs of yours boy's would be
lining up."

Funny, but the boys who'd look
firstly at my legs don't deserve me
or my time.

Besides, I'd probably bite their
heads off and eat them alive.



More than legs

I managed to find a partner who loves me for many things. My humor, my desire of creativity and not just my legs, but the entire vessel that expresses my identity. He loves me more than just a piece of flesh. He sees me as gorgeous and heart and mind. You cannot tell me that leering looks and favors with a end result in mind beats trust and communication. Joy and happiness over my objectification. I am happy how I am. Free to be loved and valued for more than just my legs.

I am uncomfortable

[illegible]

Crop tops. Dresses of any length, crazy patterns, bright colors, shorts, off the shoulder tops, sleeveless tops, turtlenecks, bikinis, short socks, crocs, just the act of letting my hair down. rings, necklaces, I am uncomfortable and feel it all everyone's eyes on me everyone looking at me over and over again
SOMEDAY I WILL BE COMFORTABLE IN ALL I WEAR ANF THE ANXIETY WILL BE NOTHING.



Breasts

Before I started 6th grade, the middle school had an information night to prepare us for the beginning awkward years of our existence. I remember the gym teacher making an offhand comment to the parents that if they had a daughter, it might be time for them to discuss getting us a bra to avoid awkwardness in the locker room.

I didn't want to grow breasts, because they signified not only change but also processes I didn't want to deal with. I used to dream that I could just skip past the awkward phase and be happier without the bumps. I didn't wear a bra until the middle of 6th grade, when the girls in my gym class started making fun of my developing body that I was already ashamed of. They already didn't like me, and my refusal to bind my boobs confused them.

Why did it feel like my worth as a woman was my chest and the rest of my puberty?

It's not like I already identified as a woman beforehand.

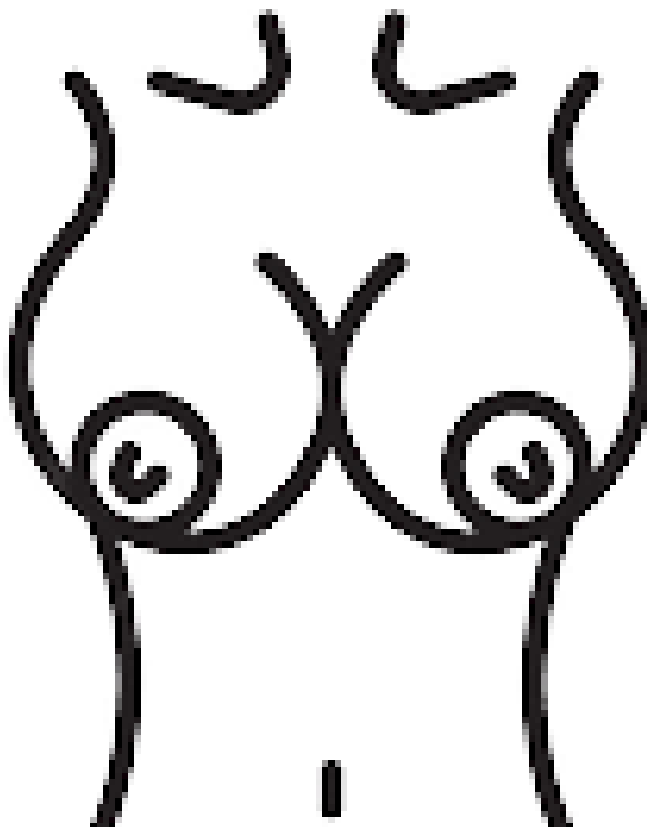
My loathing for the two lumps on my chest grew when male classmates who never paid me much mind would look me up and down. Or when this boy snapped my bra strap during math class when nobody was looking, smirked at me and continued on with his assignment. When I'd get awkward compliments about how well I was maturing.

Maybe in my body but I was still a child in mind.

These things have messed me up for such a long time. However, today I'm proud of my breasts. Their ability to look good in an outfit, or in the future feed my children. Their ability to shock the world or be a good pillow.

I wish I could just acknowledge this part of my life as a passing thought. But I can't easily do so when I feel like my breasts have become a factor in the start of my sexualization's. By near strangers and even peers.

Won't let them phase me now as my chest will be held proud.



Acceptance is a journey that's TBC

I may not be sure of the future. I may slip up now and then. But I'll always get through with the care of my family and friends. With a touch of their hands, or a comforting hug. I know that I'm surrounded with wonderful love.

Not only do I have my immediate family there to comfort me when I'm feeling a little less like myself, but I have friends and my partner to remind me to eat and take care of myself, even if I'm anxious. Telling me I look beautiful even if I look like a mess. Self love ultimately comes from within, but also I've learned that we shouldn't hesitate to the ones who care for us as well as admitting when I make mistakes. For I am not perfect. Nobody is after all and I plan on laughing through the mistakes and conquering my obstacles a day at a time.

This journey is ongoing, and I plan on continue onwards.

Because my life and wellbeing is a gift and acceptance is a journey that is to be continued.

Healing



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