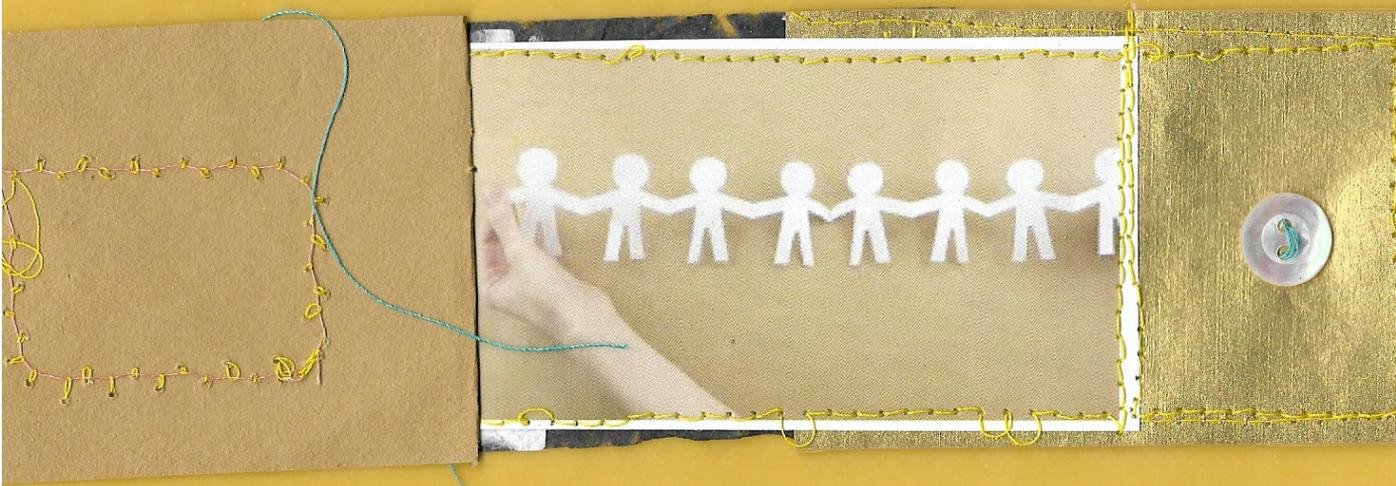


Out of Mind & Into Body



[sarah] Cavar

Out of Mind & Into Body

[1985] Cavar

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For Claire Houston, Jina Kim, and all the rest.

“YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY A CACOLGY
YOU LIKE TO STUDY — FUNNY HOW THAT IS

TO HAVE A MIND HALVED INTO OPEN COMPENDIUM
TO HAVE A VOICE MOST SEXY WHEN IT’S GONE”

—Joey de Jesus, *Materia Scroll* (2018).

“I live in the latest brutal architecture”

—Emily Wolahan, “There were delays and stoppages”
(in *Cream City Review*, 2021)

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1. Countdown

face books memory
years from here
never thought I'd live to be
ok to be to live today
to live to be a june july to
day to live to breathe the word
today¹ —

¹today, to-day, i day
you day,
hesheit days, we

June sun. Shiver-sweating college crewneck
too hopeful for my body.

Name a cold-sweat, imply fear. Realize
you are mute among each lightness
approximate a doe: collapse on impact.

This is not a countdown this is

a longhard stretch er
a LOOM of complicit wmn, lookin
dead (to me)
a beadbox, no STRING
s s s s
a COUNTERblessing
a youth
a how

a col|/| /| /|/°°°lapse

once i looked

direct

into the sun.
it looked to
me
to be a two-
way

2. On Being III

(I) The things I'm afraid to say because of who might

a story in erasures.

I wish I could tell all the things that frighten me but truthfully her seat at the power-knowledge nexus amplifies the

I'm feeling today and everyday so much that all I
can do is and

when she asks me *how can I be of servious to you*

I service wrong because it feels that way. Lately I've been th
worse and worse and if only I could enough for it to be as scary as is.

Cyborgism Intensifies

Between chides for my prolonged absence from the chair, hygienist A. asks about a single lingering bracket on my left tooth. It is docile, silver and seemly; I can prod its tiny spoke with a finger and feel the gap it rests in. When (13) my last baby tooth fell from that spot, the new one grew sideways: a pathetic shanty of a cuspid amid a red sea of gum. Lion that it is, the tooth finally desists in its twisting motion when caged tight with red meat.

It's just part of my mouth now, I say of the bracket, which is now as old as a first-grader. The orthodontist never took it off. Hardly notice anymore. It isn't like it hurts me. Sometimes I forget what side it's on.

I have never seen anything like it! crows Dr. Lupien Jr., aspiring likeness of my parents' & grandparents' dentist, Dr. Lupien Sr. albeit lacking the requisite beer belly. Jovial Jr. says, Thing sure did its job! Then he strikes metal with the tool I cannot see. I wait on hollow agony as if it were a tooth. Nothing. *Lookit-that*, he said. Hasn't budged since the thing went on.

Losing herself in the process

Realize it's a body
onscreen. Avatar
of some young deity,

hungering to animate.

Danger's on her face
hip to heartbone. Nose
in child's pose, sledridden

crest. Watch tabletop spines,
a convex twist, tender flesh
nest crevice

corners butter-knife
soft tender sounds, stilling
to the mouse-click

feel her menu missing letters
nothing like to fit my mouth.
Woman turns to omen

lacking

talks her flesh
to whittle-down,
shaped soap with daily use.

The Variance Variations

“Empathy, evidently,
existed

only within the
human
community, whereas intel-
ligence to some degree
could be found through-
out every phylum and
order including the arach-
nida.” — Phillip K. Dick,
*Do Androids Dream of Elec-
tric Sheep?*

To dream of going haywire.
When wires bared and fringing
sting bare fingers in repair,
doctor calls the shock
autistic.

Years don't work the same
for us, I track in terms of generation
model and expiry date. Nine ago,
the first self: the i
Mac, 20 in human years.

Today andys aren't retired but
socialized
and manufacture stops at
obsolescence.

Real autistics bite, they say.
Realer autistics v o i g h t -
kampff at thequiz dot com and
here, You're A Replicant Who Thinks

You know
how it goes: the child drowned
swallowed by the family pool,
looked at first like she was dancing

It's Human!

changing the conversation on changing the conversation on changing the

UPON

[CONSENSUALLY]

VISITING THE PSYCHIATRIST

FOR THE FIRST TIME

every three months, e.b. asks me how's the ocd going? and I tell her, "well,
you know. still have it" & she recommends deep breaths. thanks
for my script, cold busride back to campus. sitting with myself 2
decompress and count every single
blessing I might know. and I know
I know
I know
(x4)
at least 6 777 216
ways it could be worse than this
and none of them have happened yet

Things that shouldn't feel like writing but do

Bones into points. Censoring before the page was through. Before the thought
Fighting the urge to pull myself back, own rottie's handler, muzzle over tongue.
Hours spent erasing all the effort. Deleting likes from every passage. Recursion I mistake recursion's meaning. Not poetry but process, which I am told to trust and piss on. Felt like poetry, but like the reality of the thing, not like poetic but ached spine, screen glare eyes mine unseen. Running over subject with fragments look pretty. Parts pretty. Words of assemblage. Who's to prove the night stays on when we're all too tired to ensure

friday night fright at the scary asylum

NOV 10

"Vanished: the Hospital on the Hill
Public · Hosted by Historic Northampton"

hard to choose between seeing
family or entertaining past

.
food will be better with a family.
the turkey is nice and warm and buttered potatoes
crushed into greenbeans yams bread and something to drink real plates for serving our real
ridged knives to cut
in two glasses of [dark thick juice] or [water] if you want.

when we talk about hospital food
and this will be the hospital
what are we talking about?
&when

will you remember cart-late sound
dreadingwaiting
unreality or socked-traipsed pathway

"No one wad [sick] tortured when I worked there. It
should of [sicksick] never closed [sicksicksick]

I know about the unmarked graves."

(II) The other

things I'm afraid to say because of who might be

a story

echoes the song mile-deep it's mine. it's in my cupholder. It's in my camera. you're not
mother says the song into my ear bec amera

tap edo ver

i have wondered

about which desires i am allowed to feel for as long as i have
felt. i fear i am one of >> those << who chews a filthy wad of gum, spits remains
in its sweet roundness bitter, tasteless,

malformed

although there is no body that is malformed or misshapen there are bodies that have been formed
and reformed with lustful malice, i fear (for) myself i fear
for any object of my rage or teeth like the gum, redder than shrimp, pinker than blood, my being
gum itself, gummed, gummy, crimes against enamel all

wonder

how long goes on in the average body, when to lose my taste? can you fix the thing with listerine?
can you fix it with vanilla? can you fix it with your tongue alone? can you tell my belly
back bubblegum its flavor?

Out of Mind & Into Body

I am in the thick of water. Below
my rocks - my childhood
Moss, pain-splattered boots
to mark my place; posts we keep
above the water, trunks and love left
in the cabin. Here is the river the sum
mer I seek to swim through,
white light to sole.

So I am nineteen. I am a long
pause. I'm fifteen, a
distance between desk and face.
I am the act of holding
onto voices, still crooked tween
my self and body
Is all lost-? I mean
to say, "post-". — I mean, to
speak the present tense
yearnahalf n change.

Sink

Bodies run emotion

fast like they think

jesus did. Barefoot

on the river

split like *difference*

//

if there is enough light to my body

I ought give surely

i will end lead

//

sure

too, transcending

on the river

i do fear the love

split like *difference*

and from whom

i do fear the love

a weight

a together

i am getting better

on the river

jesus di /e/ d. Barefoot

somewhere

my con

temporary bones

a weight

fast like they think

i am getting better

3. On Being In Transit

4.29.17

compressed i rush

to center. may i turn it in
-side out. are we to make our selves

pack, never more

than necessary, when there is no-
where to go? easy to

wish to be dehumanized

more often. i wish

it

rolled sweet off

more tongues wish

she was removed

wish i was inanimate: crucially

unbodied.

i wish not for *his*

depraved, saving grace, wishing

she was not a dagger

to rip stitches

Birthrite

On the table I am never
a woman but never felt more like one.

Pretending to take my binder off, their
blinders on, I am a method –
acting natural:

I know boys will cross arms
below their rocky chests; shirts swooping
above heads, behind hair, then off and sprinting
toward the nearest object. A chair. A bed:

resting.

What is a woman if not a document
to edit? What is a woman
if not a charge depleting credit; power
Butler let me do this, please, let me lie
on the couch like a girl giving birth

to myself. Milk the fear out my chest while I peel
peeling open.

God grant me the understanding you are
that we are liars and i too
am unreal.

God grant me the to accept she like a bullet
to the face to spite my body. Grant me the courage
the woman is not.

Let me table this question of realness
let me be the subject, so sturdy &
deep, let me be the small relief between
its legs.

HSTRY

to hold you in my hands
to start day one
lyric, not mess
make me something
try me no longer loose.

this is all normal.

today, bless
ask as if your ask is
as though this is that you want
as if i am the way back

to refuse forgiving
forgetting is
won't bleed again
you can hear or bite
and how about

am i healing?

i am refusing

the oxy.

pissing away.

i am your chances

your blood.

as i am

three times holier
my memory's stomach. wait. ask
laxative,
to pass.
the decade.

Aggregation

(after “Making of” by Franny Choi)

Cyborgs are made out of words.

Cyborgs are made out of things

named cyborgs.

Cyborgs are made out of things only

things if you squint at them,

just like their male and female counterparts.

At midnight, I clasp too

hands across my abdomen, pray

to be so small and vast

the cloud will have me.

My prayers are prayers in drag,

poems

who enumerate in wordless codes

fitted to the human throat

re: [my] tiring

of people treating my gender
like a kind of cure

ncy, like... i'm trying to use my insurance rather than my pocket, so whaddyu care what my pants are full of? i mean I spent everything in my pocket on tuition i meant I mean transition. So clearly nothing's left to see. Forget amex when im I i use my [F] 64.0 for everything now and when I turn it in at the office they say say gimme meat and im like if you didn't take all my shit i'd probably have it by now & i wish i wish I want less in on occasion. i mean the coolqueerbois taught me how I oughta look and how I aughta fuck and how girls aughtto fawn me like a great buck, or however the metaphor goes. Like 2 years in I got great horns to fight the boys w. Like in 2 or 6 more I'll be another word and who wants that? ha, get it

WHO?

yeah this is my poem and so i get to choose who's capital here & who's destitute and who's never seen a dollar of their own and guess what — today I wear the pants tho i'm actually wearing a nightie at 2pm (that's pm) with some pink sheep on it & listening to thrash or whatever that gender is...i mean genre can't you tell what i mean re:

UNTITLED

(to be read aloud. read as quickly as you can
words.)

unless you encounter large gaps between

I.

this is your form, they say. let us know
your insides before we cut.
are these all of your diagnoses. confirm:
as though in hindsight i would add more
crazy. i hereby certify

i have only ever experienced mild to moderate
for which i have been medicated by
and the symptoms are
no more.

i am hailed. the whole room hears
her ask what is the difference
between fluoxetine & prozac i tell her the price

II.

johnny: on. WEIGHTS;
VITALS, done. do i take off my
shoes, i ask, or my jacket? waves me away. i subtract
just slightly from whatever shows
up. under my johnny i suck the stomach no one sees
beneath my ribs, an awning.
it looks bad to ask your weight
given the circumstances.

knock

slim&small-chested she enters. a(d)dress. a monitor
brightness too high, shine me
shirtless, johnny round my shoulders stomach
origami'd my jeans,
belly-snug. the fold. me, myself, my breasts
my pants
the clavicle. to run one's hands
one's mouth.

i don't know how to say the things she said, like,
one was just slightly larger than the other, how
everyone has one that's a little bigger. cold measuring
tape. pinch. ha – yup, this one is and this one is marked
difference

i was suddenly thirteen fourteen fifteen sixteen seventeen when she

² i am old man paper bag old man
excess skin old paper skin man skin
wind gusted plactice plastic i old
paper man flapskin man skinman
skim man flap flap

skin flap like skinwind
paper i have iam old
maninside wind-gusted plastic

i have excess skini'm a paper bag
inside a paper bag in a paper ina

III.

again. no fighting back. my face and eyes
burning and me moving up and
out of my own filthy shoes

you are just going to end
up with flaps of flesh (like
an old man)

outside the door: she has excess
flesh (oh please let me re-iterate the
egregious excessivity of her beached-whale
flesh) i don't think she's right
for key-hole

[call it biological: sex
sells. you are so lucky they will
foot the bill; if you acknowledge this is purely cosmetic
you will be caught. dearly
you will pay]

i'm still interactive. touchable. low art
and i submit: become a medical model
eminently experienced
immutably submissive

patient

Acknowledgements:

“The Variance Variations” appeared first in *Electric Lit*.

“changing the conversation on changing the conversation on changing the” appeared first in *Whale Road Review*, and was nominated for a 2020 Best of the Net award.

“friday night fright at the scary asylum” appeared first in the zine *(Mis-)treated* (2017) created and edited by the author, as “just wondering about your potential friday night plans, no pressure.” Find that zine and others at https://issuu.com/whats_your_story/.

“Out of Mind & Into Body” appeared first in *Luna Luna Magazine*.

"4.29.17" appeared first in *Scab Magazine*.

"Birthrite" appeared first in *Sweet Tree Review*, and was nominated for a 2018 Pushcart Prize.

"Aggregation" appeared first in *trampset*.

Comrades of the Chap:

“Losing herself in the process” was named after an anonymous blogger from a very long time ago. We never spoke; she is in my heart.

“friday night fright at the scary asylum”: for the inmates. May we avenge them.

“UNTTIED” would not exist without Bettina Judd’s world-shifting poetry book, *Patient* (“the research question is: why am I patient?”).

About the Author

[uɹɛs] Cavar is a PhD student, writer, and transgender-about-town, and serves as managing editor at Stone of Madness Press and founding editor at swallow::tale press. Author of two chapbooks, A HOLE WALKED IN (Sword & Kettle Press) and THE DREAM JOURNALS (giallo lit), they have also had work in *Electric Literature*, *The Offing*, *Bitch Magazine*, and elsewhere. Cavar navel-gazes at cavar.club and tweets @cavarsarah.

The ghost of Foucault hovers in the corner of these poems, which defy their own discipline as they reach toward something more. Sarah Cavar's aching meditation on the challenges of inhabiting a body is also a stirring and serious account of what it means to be a patient, and to patiently await -- no, to demand -- a "getting better" that goes beyond the body and the self.

-Megan Milks, author of *Margaret and the Mystery of the Missing Body* and *Slug and Other Stories*

*

If we consider poems to be onion peels all here burn to the core of the reader's flesh. *Out of Mind & Into Body* by Sarah Cavar is a chapbook that delivers hard truths about Madness, hospitalization, sickness, identity, and how others and the Other discover the body (of the narrator). Poems here drum on in staccato or fast beats all the while stinging with "prayers in drag" ("Aggregation").

-Rachael Crosbie, author of *Trick Mirror or Your Computer Screen*

*

Out of Mind & Into Body tears through the medicalized trappings of social embodiment with analytical precision. From examining the ways in which doctors pry through autistic minds to unraveling the feminine coding of a fainting couch, Cavar leaves no diagnostic harm left unquestioned. Readers, be warned: this *is* a book for the faint of heart and audaciously limp of wrist. With their third stunning chapbook release in under a year, Cavar asserts themselves as an incomparable force across genres and forms. "what does it mean when i stand naked revealing you, nothing."

-Fox Auslander, lead poetry editor of *Alien Literary Magazine*.