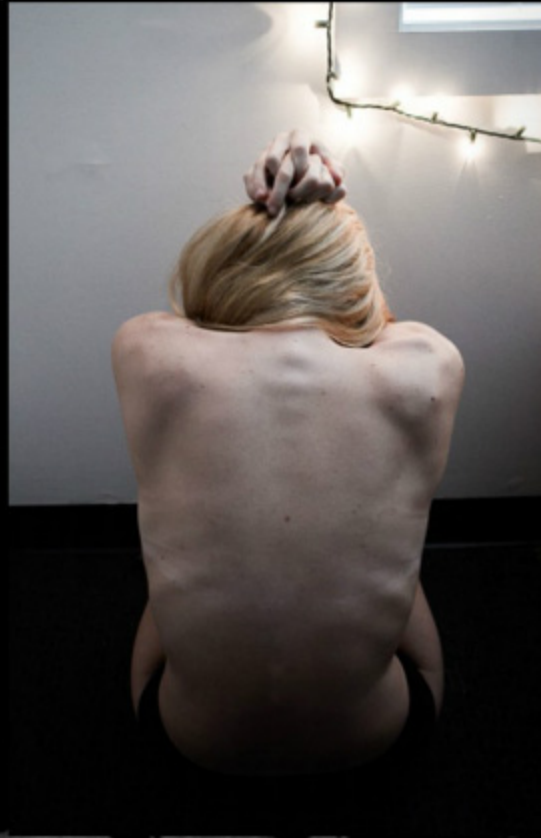


# SCREAM



I found nothing but drawers of junk that meant nothing to me. I sank. As if someone was trying to pull me down below the ground's surface. The tears streamed freely down my cheeks. I couldn't breathe. I couldn't think straight. I screamed. But the black room was still. My voice was silent. I collected myself just long enough to remember where I put it. I crawled across the floor and opened the top drawer of my desk. All the way in the back, wrapped in a small tissue package was my first. It was important to me in ways that most wouldn't understand. It was a force that called my name when I needed a smoke break. The tissues surrounding contained remains from last weeks trial. I've been told about cleanliness, but what was the point in cleaning? I mean, don't

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worry, this wasn't a mistake that just kept happening. I didn't keep falling into it or some bullshit. I was hurt. Nobody knew. Nobody was going to know. So I hid it. And I bled scars. And then I did it again. And again. Until the tears ran out. Not the first, not the last, but quite possibly the loneliest. I want to talk about it the way I remember it. Cold. Dark. Frustrating. It was an amount of pain that would be unbearable to many people. Somehow I managed to come out alive, but with my eyes still shut. Maybe there was a plan for what had happened. Maybe there was some reason that my life during that time changed dramatically. I still have yet to figure out that reason. All I know is that what has happened is done.

**Valerie Moran**

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