

From the poetry collection

The Suffering of Young Hana,

By Katja Gorečan,

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Hana and Poetry (Hana is fed up)

as for poetry, hana would prefer to stay silent,
but I can't

she started hiding and burying her poems in the ground
for them to maybe someday be discovered.

as for poetry, hana would prefer to scream.

what you love becomes disgusting in these parts.

hana will never say what she's thinking,

because that would end her career as a poet.

hana thinks, but she won't admit.

hana wants to read her poems,

hana wants to publish a book,

but hana will never succeed, because

hana is not a typical poet

(hana doesn't know what a typical poet looks like but she knows it's not her),

and, most importantly – hana has no connections.

hana has had enough.

she's tired of fighting with poets.

why should she have to fight for her poetry?

hana likes to watch self-proclaimed star poets,
all made from the same mould.

every year they publish a book of poetry,

every year they perform thousands of times,

dispensing wisdom and faking love.

every year the same poets win awards,

or maybe a year goes by in between?

everywhere she sees the same faces telling her

what are you doing, woman child, you're not welcome here

there's nobody here but us atop the everlasting

parnassus, and until we die you have nothing on us

(or how civilization lost its faith)

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then they drink and become aggressive
and get drunk on their male power,
which hana will never have,
so she should just get lost to where she came from.
she was thinking to kneel in front of them
and beg them
please read my poems they're not bad, they really aren't,
but today she's still too tired and not strong enough.
someday your poems will be good, but never as good as mine.

hana won't stop writing,
but will simply become apathetic to all the meltdowns and punches.
that's exactly what we want.
that's why I always like to punch where it hurts the most.

and this is the point at which hana divides poets between two categories:
the ones that stay human
and the ones that become beasts.

Hana and Her Period

maybe you'll find this disgusting,
but hana often likes to sniff her
menstrual blood.
she finds it refreshing and special.
she remembers the day when she got her first period.
she remembers even better that at the time her vagina was practically
hairless, but that's for another chapter.
hana's period gives her a lot of trouble.
she usually gets terrible cramps, but sometimes
just pretends she'd gotten them,
and sometimes she just faints by herself, to show her weakness.
with her first period, hana discovered
she had become a woman!
she and her mom then went to the store and bought the largest pads available,
the ones mostly used during the night because they have wings.
that's how hana discovered that she was a woman.
and that she was fertile and that it was still too early for her
to have sex for the first time.
if we're totally honest – it's not that she had anyone to have sex with,
as she had naively decided to lose her virginity
with the one man that she'd love
and stay with for the rest of her life.
such were the thoughts that I had when I was eleven.
hana first sniffed her

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period blood when she was seventeen.
she liked the smell, and she still does it often,
but she never tells anybody, because if she did, people would think
she's a bit crazy.
before ultimately making her the subject of a biography describing
what a special person she had been.
and of course how everybody loved her. *even though nobody knew me.*
anyway, as it's already been made clear.
hana and her period have a special relationship.
hana has just admitted to another lie.
she did tell about her experience with tasting blood
to her ex-boyfriend, but of course he just thought her
perverted

disgusting
and most of all

UNLADYLIKE.

all that's written in this book
are secrets, and let them remain secrets.
because our country is one of the few where people are able
to keep their and their neighbours' secrets.
in this poem, hana is labelled unladylike
because she tastes menstrual blood.
menstrual blood is a fluid
that must not be touched,
as it is toxic and may cause serious disorders
of the lungs and heart.
or reason.

Hana and the World

as soon as hana steps out of the house she feels like crying.
and she feels terribly ill.
hana knows that this can't be morning sickness
as she hasn't had sex for two years, ever since she'd decided on her fast.
hana knows *that I'd just told a lie,*
after all, we're not her parents
and we're not her grandma
or grandpa
to hold it against her if she tells us
that the last time she'd had sex was yesterday

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and that as she woke up in the morning
she had no idea who was lying next to her.
but in order for the reader to feel better,
I'll just say that hana had sex two years ago,
or perhaps even better – that she's a virgin
and plans on going to a convent,
just as her parents have always wanted.
that is – hana doesn't like the world.
she likes having sex with strangers, because strangers don't hurt.
on the other hand, she did realize, just now, writing this,
that she wants pain, because pain leads to beautiful
things, and what's beautiful can't be bad for one's life.
she hates days when she wakes up and doesn't have cigarettes
because then she's forced to immediately go to the store
instead of first having her coffee and only then
engaging in conflict with other people.
these other people can be a nuisance because hana
often sings to herself as she walks
and is even more fond of talking to herself.
people give her strange looks,
because nobody else talks to themselves save for
loonies, junkies and bums.
and perhaps lonely men
who seem to be talking to themselves
but are actually addressing hana.
so hana basically hates today before it's even started
because she'd foolishly smoked her last cigarette yesterday
because she was nervous and had run out of fingernails.
wearing a jumpsuit, she slowly shuffled to the store
ten metres from her apartment
nervous because she could meet the neighbour
that she'd had sex with three months ago and who really hurt her.
but why blame him,
she should rather blame herself, that's much easier.
three months and not a single reply from him.
how is our dear hana supposed to survive such distress within herself?
she has become a chain smoker.
but despite passionately feeding the cancer within herself,
she still misses him, though she'll deny it,
as it simply hurts too much
every time
she thinks about him and doesn't want to be pathetic,
because who would want,
need
or love
an emotional poet.

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Hana and Dreams

is the only thing that hana believes.
she divides dreams into evil and good,
into real and less real.
when she's with him or thinks of him, she is dreaming.
when she walks into his apartment, she ceases to exist.
she never gets anything but gives everything.
before she goes to sleep, she makes sure there is nobody under the bed.

She slept with the table lamp on until she was fifteen,
now she leaves the curtains open so the street lights can enter her room
even though she looks through the window for another hour before she goes to sleep,
to check if the psycho from her neighborhood is still watching her through the cracks.

hana had a lot of childhood dreams.
she wanted to become
an actor,
a singer,
a doctor and
a teacher.
hana has often performed at school events when she was a child
and at the age of eleven, she wrote her first poem.

hana has stopped playing
hana has stopped writing
hana has stopped dreaming

hana's Slovene language teacher yelled at her in front of
the whole class
she said that her poems are not really hers and that there is no point in reading them.
hana was hurt for the first time and she realized that
you can not trust people because they hurt you,
and that, above all, she will never again have the courage to do the things
she really wants
because she will always be afraid.
hana *I'll never do anything.*
because this is the easiest way.

Hana and Anorexia

She had her first encounter with anorexia when she was thirteen.
crucial were the thoughts of her teachers
who were saying to her parents
your daughter is simply too fat

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*she needs to practice some sport
she is always the runner who finishes last
and her uncle
hana, you'll never be as thin as your cousin.*

then hana fell in love
and with her
puppy fat
she simply was not successful in seduction
that's why she stopped eating – she didn't have time because
she was constantly thinking of him.
hana, if you lose one kilo more I'm taking you to a psychiatrist
when hana was standing in front of the mirror
she saw only fat and loose skin.
and the best thing was that she felt disgusting as the last piece of trash.
of course, nobody else saw that.
and nobody was worried
let alone helped.
hana then started to eat again and went
from forty kilos to fifty.
for a few years she felt comfortable in her own skin.
every now and then she went to the bathroom and wanted to vomit,
but she somehow didn't manage to
even though she pushed her finger very deep in her throat.
that was until the appearance of someone
with whom she felt dirty and incompetent again.
currently Hana's weight is decreasing,
she likes the feeling of bones sticking out of her body
as they should always be.
we can only hope that this someone will one day recognize

that our hana lost weight and *how beautiful I am now.*

Hana and Shaving

things that are logical for most of us
are just the opposite of
what hana thinks.
same is the case with shaving.
hana didn't know it is *natural* to shave your vagina
until she was in high school and went to the swimming pool with friends
hanging out of her swimsuit were blond
but quite thick pubic hair and, of course,
because people are mostly friendly and considerate beings,
her *friends* screamed
so you could hear their echoes everywhere around swimming pools

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and our hana came home crying
then her mother comforted her that pubic hair are
super cool and that in her time girls didn't shave down there.
hana concluded that she will not shave either,
except for the occasions such as going to the pool.

when hana became an adult, she came to an important conclusion.
I love my pubic hair, she said
and caressed herself. *I will never separate from it.*
no man will ever convince me to shave!
she kept this mentality for about half a year,
but then she came to a different conclusion.

men do not like body hair on women.
that's why i will shave only
when i am hundred percent certain
that i will have an intercourse.

currently, hana doesn't have sex very often, so she grew a jungle down there.
hana hates razors.
hana is always clumsy while shaving (or drunk)
and then one half of her leg is shaved and the other half hairy.
the same with other parts of her body.
hana likes to listen to her friends when they are explaining

i like to shave because my sweetheart likes it
yeah, me too, I know that he would be uncomfortable with me as well
however, hana, how can you be so hairy
go buy a wax kit or visit a beauty salon
hana, this is not hygienic, no wonder you're alone
hana, you're like a bear
you know what, hana, a woman should take care of herself,
otherwise her man will replace her.
you think they like
having pubic hair between their teeth when they are licking it
I'm telling you, start taking care of yourself!

make sure you are not replaced one day
otherwise you will be left alone and lonely and single
and all the words that are connected with loneliness
are simply terrible and incomprehensible

hana is silent and finally she says
that being hairy has a positive side
I'm never cold in winter

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Hana and the Forest

hana used to hate the fact that
her house is surrounded by forests, but it makes her happy now.
every time

I return home

she feels freedom and she grew to love peace and quiet she gets away from
people

some time ago she carved letters into tree trunks
she still enjoys picking mushrooms and nothing kills her more
than seeing leaves change colors with the seasons.

this helps her realize that months have gone by
and she achieved nothing.

or maybe I expect too much too soon?

hana will never admit *that I am lonely*

maybe this is what kills her more than leaves falling off trees

for some time, hana had her own tree
she could climb and once she dreamed
of building a house on it.

now, forest owners have cut the tree down and hana does not know anymore
where to build a house.

that's why I have to walk to the next tree.

Hana and Nail Biting

we can understand it as a hobby or as an compulsive habit.

hana bites her fingernails as well as her toenails.

she is ashamed to wear open toe sandals or flip flops in the summer.

she hides her fingers while smoking

and when she does not smoke she puts her hands in her pockets.

what remained is a thin red layer of nail tissue and we do not know
what will happen when she bites it off.

she managed to stop only once and

it lasted just two months anyway.

I didn't know what to do with long nails

so she scratched her scalp and caused herself

enormous bloody scars

which I couldn't hide

because her hair fell out too.

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Hana and Rain

hana likes to sit on the balcony when it rains
what she likes even more are puddles she can jump into, *but*
once upon a time I wanted plastic boots
that would have
kept her feet dry.
rain makes her calm while she's waiting
because it is tender
because it falls
and because it disappears when it reaches the ground.

just like her.

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