

THEY CALL US

EDITION 13



FLOOZIES



They Call Us is a literary magazine created by powerful women and gender minorities wanting to empower other women and gender minorities. Using media, art, and literature as a means to inspire, They Call Us wants to tell the everyday struggles of women and gender minorities from around the world.

The purpose of art is to create change, so They Call Us works to unite artists to tell the stories of those that are normally silenced. Our goal is to ignite conversation and encourage people of all ages, races, sexualities, genders, nationalities, abilities, and the like to share their stories. They Call Us wishes to diversify the messages we see online and change the dialogue to give credibility to all of us who have felt helpless and lacking a credible voice.

A NOTE TO OUR READERS

This edition centers on themes of sex, sexuality, sexual harassment, abuse, and body image. Please take care of yourself as you read. After, please take care of a friend.

They Call Us seeks to tell the stories of any and all who wish to share them. Sometimes these stories, while important to listen to, can be hard to hear.

Above all else, please take care of yourself.

Thank you for reading.

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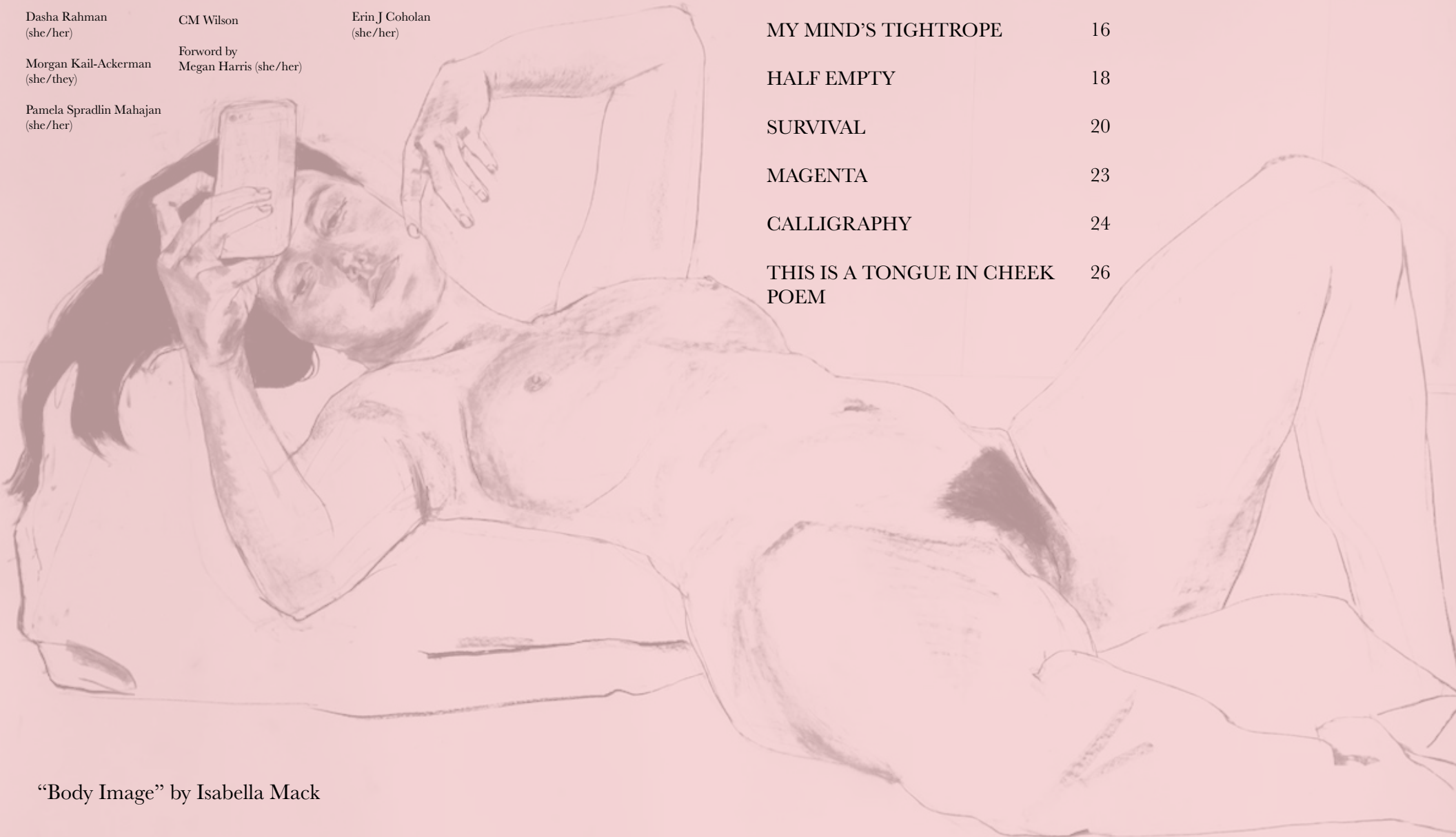
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“Body Image” by Isabella Mack

FOREWORD

By Megan Harris

We are asked to be innocent, yet intriguingly experienced. Sexy, but never too forward. Confidently beautiful, though naively demure. Women have shouted about the contradictions of our existence long before America Ferrera rocked pink in Barbie.

We are well versed in the aisle in Victoria's Secret where cutesy meets fetish and hot becomes whore. This line between desire and shame is etched into our bodies, like the creases on our palms. Because sexual experience is our responsibility. From lust at first sight to an unchosen pregnancy, women are the sole bearers of sexual repercussions.

But while beauty is in the eye of the beholder, sexy is locked in the male gaze. The word "floozy" is assigned to women whose sexual prowess exceeds what is considered socially acceptable. A woman whose salacious nature becomes so visible that it may expose her as someone who would also like to enjoy sex.

Unfortunately, the word floozy is not just male-imposed. Women use it against each other far too often, which is why we saw it fitting that this edition come after *They Call Us Catty*. We believe sexual shame is born out of judgment and fear. Judgment and catty behavior is a cruelty little social reprogramming can fix.

Fear, we can do something about. Society teaches women that to be sexually open is to put yourself at risk — at risk of pregnancy, assault, public shame. Once exposed to this risk, there is nothing that can absolve you of the consequences. Women are made responsible and often deserving of "whatever comes to you." So, some women choose to remain tucked safely within societal conventions, seeing other women as outliers dangerously playing with fate. And when a woman does that happily, they get jealous of that freedom... maybe even a little catty.

We do not mean to imply that all women who choose to wait or engage in sexual activity more scarcely are only doing so out of fear. Not at all. We only hope to stress the point that while the patriarchy built these walls around our sexuality, we do not need to abide by them. Make that decision on your own.

Regardless of how we choose to express our natural sexual desires, rest assured that they are worth expressing. That is what we sought to do with this edition. We wanted to give our artists and authors a space to play in their promiscuity and be celebrated for it.

Go forth. Be slutty. Be bold. Be naughty and kind. Give your body what it wants and by all means, tell us how it goes ;).

WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW

By Pandy Ali Kahl *trigger warning: domestic abuse*

He called all of us hoochies because his girlfriend cheated on him days after they lost their virginity together. He walked over to our lunch table, tough guy with something to get off his chest, and ripped into all of us. His boys were egging him on. We were the problem, sleeping around with every guy who gave us a little attention, not caring about their feelings, on to the next guy. He didn't know how many of us were still virgins, how many hadn't really dated someone yet, or even if anyone had been with more than one person. We were all guilty by association. And all the guys thought it was okay to believe that.

They called her easy when that first guy shared their story: while everyone was celebrating the team's win at his parents' house, they snuck up to the bedroom to ride that high alone and when they reemerged, he told the team how bad she wanted to be with the captain. He didn't tell them that they had been seeing each other for months but had to keep it a secret because her parents were strict.

They said she had a tramp stamp when she was eighteen. She owned it, flaunted it. She didn't want them to know she was covering up scars from an abusive girlfriend. Colorful wings and swirls wrapped around circular imprints. No one would know unless they dared to touch. She thought it would be easier to deal with their jokes over their pity.

They called her a slut in her early twenties when their boyfriends kept flirting with her. She didn't flirt back. Too often

men mistook kindness for interest, and women who didn't grow up with brothers didn't understand guy things. Both let their insecurities take control, and neither knew she had been faithfully married for some time.

The uncles called her a minx by twenty-seven after his dad propositioned her, and she declined. Stunned by the occurrence, still trying to process what happened, she didn't tell her fiancé. What he heard was that she was flirting, and though he didn't believe she would do that, he couldn't live with the gossip and how the community would see him. She wouldn't live with someone who couldn't stand up for her.

When all her friends were getting married, the aunties said she was single because she was promiscuous. They said she was always a wild child, snuck around with boys, probably already got pregnant once or twice. She wasn't a respectable woman. She couldn't marry their sons. They were partially right. She did have sex, a lot of it, with boys and girls; she did get pregnant; but, she didn't want to marry any of their sons. She had too much respect for herself, knew what she liked and what she wanted, and that they couldn't give that to her.

The church ladies say I have loose morals, but I don't subscribe to their ideas on right and wrong or pride and shame. I don't apologize for any relationship: platonic, romantic, sexual, or even the one-night stand. I don't need to explain my actions or my reasoning. There is no shame in our house. I understand that I cannot control what others will think or say about me. What I know is that I have strong values, high standards, and haters because of that.

We could have had three, thirty, or no partners; we would still be called floozies.



YOU ALREADY KNEW THAT

By Lexi Kail-Ackerman

Why does the way I dress threaten you so much?
Why does the amount of skin I show take up so much space in
your brain?

If I love myself I'm a self centered floozy,
but if I cover up I'm a prude.

There's nothing we can do that will satisfy you.
but that's the point right?

The capitalist patriarchy hinges on the hatred of women,
it hinges on women hating ourselves.

So you throw words at us and shame us to keep us obedient
and subservient to this pseudo land of the free
Free to assault and scrutinize,

but not free for me.

The land where we get raped and dubbed a floozy
but you rape and get dubbed, Mr. president

"You dress like a slut"

I, apparently "can't take a joke"

I'll admit your jokes are killer, but not in the way you think
Maybe I just don't find slowly and systematically ruining wom-
en's minds, bodies and souls funny

But at some point it is our faults for treating you as human,
a courtesy we were not granted

But you already knew that, right?

"You should smile more"
by Lexi Kail-Ackerman

PRIVATE SCHOOL

By Hannah Bud

“We have a fingertip length rule for a reason,” Charles Gerber, high school physics teacher, huffs. “Ms. Williams,” he turns to me, “Do you think you could talk to Sarah for me?” He gestures towards the hallway where the students are congregated before class.

“Why?” I ask, willfully ignorant.

“Have you seen her skirt?” He pauses, evaluating my silent response. “Come on, you know how it will sound coming from me. Don’t put me in that position.” I give him an expressionless nod and walk out of the faculty office.

“Sarah,” I gently call out to a group of girls who have gathered in front of their first period class. She’s the shortest among the group and easy to spot. She hears me immediately and walks over.

“Yes, Miss?” She smiles an eager smile.

It is a smile I recognize as one that has dropped from my own face. I lost it when I was her age when I came home from school on Halloween and my neighbor remarked that he liked my “promiscuous schoolgirl costume.” I responded that it wasn’t a costume. “Of course not, honey,” he said, giving me a wink.

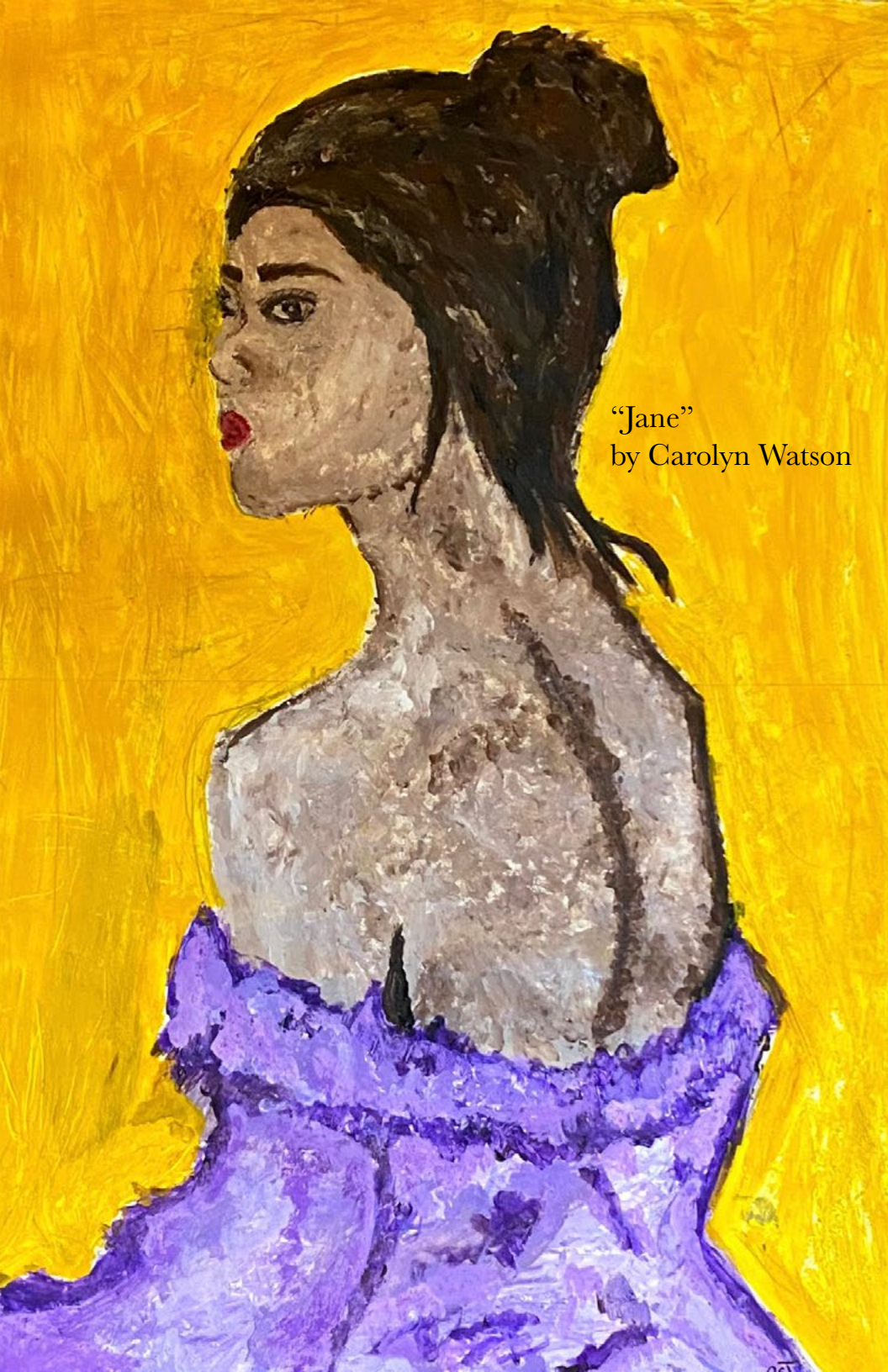
I can feel the corner of my lips arching upwards in a deceptive smile as I evaluate her uniform. Gerber is right; the skirt is well above the fingertip height. But, the truth of the matter is that there is no skirt that is going to hit Sarah near the knee that is also going to fit her waist. Sarah is fat. The uniform brand we require the girls to wear doesn’t consider figures like hers. They will always be pulled up too high on her midsection to fit her waist or pulled down in the front, stealing length from the back.

“Miss?” Sarah prompts again. She interrupts my thoughts as I am running a mental catalog of all of the outfits I no longer wear to work because of the whispers and names I have heard in the hallway from middle and high school boys. I don’t want to hear my own voice among them.

“I just wanted to say that I really enjoyed your last essay. I think it is your best work this year,” I say.

“Oh!” Sarah’s smile widens. “Thank you!”

“See you in class,” I say, giving a slight wave as I walk back to the faculty office. I leave Sarah smiling in the hallway, shoulders broad, hands at her side, fingertips brushing skin.



“Jane”
by Carolyn Watson

APHRODITE OR DEMETER?

By Sam Backlund-Clapp

There’s something deep and arcane, a rich agricultural roaring thing that sits in my chest right under my sternum. I dig my toes into the ground and whisper the names of Demeter and Gaia, water my herbs and cry with the rain, but I don’t like spring. I am not the type of agricultural archetype that embodies birth and newness, the buds blooming and sprigs poking out of the ground. I am the type of agricultural archetype that revels in autumn, that weaves through fields during the harvest, overseeing the culmination of the growing season and admires its fruition. I can and store. The colors I work with are rusty oranges browns and reds. The corn is dry in a wreath on the door. I am the end of the cycle, the transition into the space of dying.

They shucked my skin off like you would a corn husk. I still carry my scythe. When I scream it tastes of apples and pumpkin. My hair is the color of cinnamon.

MY MIND'S TIGHTROPE

By Dasha Rahman

Our minds love to indulge in this idea that a soul mate moulded perfectly to the right height, weight, hairiness, fitted with the *good* soul we all must have, is out there waiting. Somewhere between the tube ride to school, parties, homework and then the tube ride home our minds naturally drift to it. It takes the edge off reality... but the feeling of somehow not being worthy of this imagination is forever sinking into me.

Sounding the word handsome or pretty seems to have garnered too much weight on our tongues. There's too much hesitation - as if we're going through a checklist in our minds marking down every single detail - before we release the words and see the smile cross their face. Standards are not new, my bare face has weathered them since the age of nine: I remember looking at my friend's white leg on a bench in a park and wondering why mine took up one and a half slats instead of one. Just taller than me, with curly hair like the girl in our favourite books - Ella's name rolled off the tongue nice and easy. We never spoke about that: how we looked. Too cool for that, we scraped our knees and bruised our legs - hers giving way slightly more than mine. It never preoccupied our mind, we fought silly boys calling ourselves the new word "feminists". But somewhere always hiding in my mind as she yelled louder than me and ran faster than me, was the bench and the slats that marked my thighs.

My femininity was bound by books, moustaches and grease on my roots, my feminism was to not care. To give into the wax, the magazines and admit I couldn't be the way I was born, would be to deny what I believed in, what each word I read preached. But I realised, planted deep inside of me, was the root of a sin that bent every rule and boundary I taught myself: I did care.

Shakespeare's Hamlet describes a deep, almost biblical longing for a marriage - the need for another's presence so deeply and truly. In my young mind that desire almost concerns my feminism, but how long can you stand on a tightrope? How long can you deny the naturalness of dependency? Unfortunately, to give into such base desires would be to shave yourself clean of any autonomy. In attaining something so simple as love and acceptance, women are demanded to give up so much of their beliefs.

When I would rather my mind be free, empty, able to take in the colours - I find myself in a constant competition. An ongoing battle of the senses. It feels so inhumane to ask a child to make what feels like a life decision of such gravity: do I want to live in abstinence from normal interactions with men and boys because to intervene would demand me to forget my feminism? Or do I want to forget my mind for a moment and live how my life is perceived? And when do I admit that the extra half slat on my thigh basically forces me into one choice?

I wouldn't feel whole if I let go of my principles, a moment of happiness: care-free and stupid, traded for a moral stain. Truly, why do I have to choose? Why can He live without thinking, without being tortured by a decision that feels the weight of his forefathers. Why do I feel the hand of every woman on my shoulder, when He might not have thought of another person that day? And more so, is it all important? How do others live without this guilt? Because it eats me alive - no matter how many times I smile, laugh and tuck my hair into my ear, I come back to this burning in my stomach.

It's a cliché I promised to never indulge, but am I crazy? I can count on my hand the number of people who believe and hear this struggle, so is something deeply wrong with me for allowing it to fester in me? Fortunately or unfortunately, I have too much faith in my women and myself to let those moments of loneliness and lack of surety shake me. Yet that doesn't stop the grief every woman faces when they decide to be with or against, and I can't be *with* knowing what I would give up and what He would gain.

HALF EMPTY

By Morgan Kail-Ackerman

I used to be the most beautiful water bottle,
purple and shiny
Steel that was truly stainless,
Covered in protective plastic

I was brand new,
Cold and sweet water
Filled my depths,
Powerful and believably immortal

Then I was dropped
Dinged
Hit
Hurt
Banged
Beaten
Broken

Now I have dents
Silver is seen through my purple cracks
My water is gone, and so is my innocence.

Artwork
by Ellie Aldrich



SURVIVAL

By Pamela Spradlin Mahajan

Pia smoothed the rounded bottom of her protruding belly beneath the yellowing, speckled table, the thick burgundy sleeve of her sweater almost covering her hand. Though she was overheating as usual, each frigid gush of air ushered in by the dinging door chilled her.

Pia slid a finger down the glass window to her left, gazing out into the parking lot of the diner. The thick, naked branches of two large trees hung heavy over parked cars. Stubborn patches of snow and ice clung to the black pavement. She spotted the faded red of Leo's sedan from the corner of her eye. She watched him open the door and lean into the cold, holding his thin jacket tightly against himself. Pia could discern his expression from her seat: morose.

As Leo made his way through the parking lot, Pia's body stiffened and her heart pounded violently in her chest. The baby kicked her hard under the ribs. That was what she called it: *the baby*. She hadn't been able to bring herself to research names and she had asked the doctor not to tell her the sex. When Pia's mind drifted to the baby, a ball of phlegm rose into the base of her throat and the weight on her chest made it hard to inhale.

The dinging of the door chilled Pia nearly as much as the air it carried in. She sensed Leo pause over her shoulder and a few moments later he was sliding into the red vinyl seat across from her. *Sensible blue polo shirt, khakis, nose pink from the cold*. The sight of him caused a squeeze in her heart.

Leo ran a hand through the front of his short blond hair as he looked at everything but her: the waitress scribbling something on a pad behind the counter, the large man in a bowler hat gnawing on a toothpick, the salt-and-pepper shakers smeared with fingerprints.

Leo's mouth was a tight line when he finally met her gaze. He dropped his attention to her rotund belly almost immediately, turning his chin away as if he couldn't bear to take it in. The baby kicked, making Pia wonder if it could sense Leo's hostility. She instinctively smoothed her hand over her belly again.

"Where's Jessie?" he asked.

"He's gone." An iciness filled Pia's chest as she heard the words fall from her mouth, feeling an aching loneliness that nearly overpowered her.

"He's gone? What do you mean 'he's gone'?"

"We aren't together anymore."

Leo scoffed. "Are you kidding me? Wow. What a shitshow."

"I know." She stifled a sob.

Pia had been in love with Jessie—at least that's what she used to think. The manager at the auto parts store where she worked, he had pretended to *see* her, catered to her every need, disguised himself as the missing piece she so desperately sought. She believed leaving her husband for him was the right thing to do.

But when Pia told Jessie she was pregnant, his eyes had been black. She saw their future in them—or lack thereof. The realization had been an axe to her chest. Had she really just blown up her life for someone who wasn't steady, who wasn't genuine?

Leo's features were tight, unaffected. "Why did you call me?"

Pia's breathing was jagged. "I don't know."

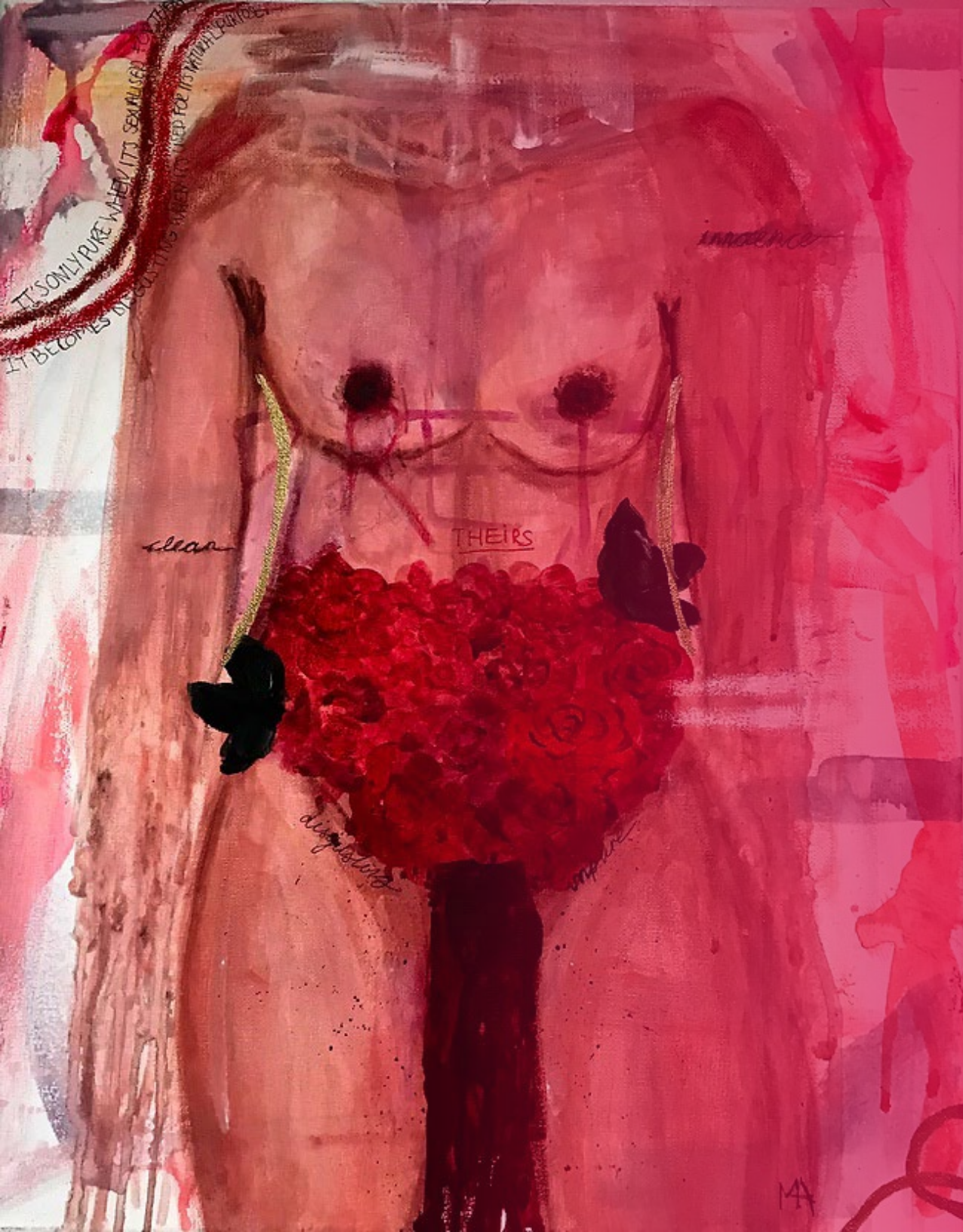
Though she thought Leo might get up and leave, he stayed. When the waitress came by, he ordered eggs and coffee. Yet each passing moment only served to make Pia feel increasingly alone. It was that very feeling of aloneness—though subtler, less intense—that had led her to seek solace in Jessie in the first place.

"Do you know if it's a boy or a girl?" Leo asked finally.

Pia shook her head, shame burning into her cheeks. "I'm so sorry," she breathed.

Leo's eyes were soft. "I know."

Leo finished his eggs and brought the white coffee cup to his lips, studying her. Silently, Pia slid her hand across the table toward him, her swollen fingers poking out from the ribbed cuff of her sweater. Leo paused for a moment, then laid a warm hand atop hers. The action sparked something inside of Pia. It caused a tiny, inextinguishable part of her to flare up, and she was suddenly certain that she would survive this nightmare of her own making, and that—despite the guilt that she wore heavy like a cloak—she deserved to.



MAGENTA

By Raina Elizabeth Watts

Artificial sunsets
And a blindingly beautiful body
The shadow of them dancing
To slow drums and a bass
Bushy brows paired with long dark hair
A subtle tongue
For not so subtle eyes

“Pretty in pink” by Myiesha Amani

CALLIGRAPHY

By Serena Prospero

When men ask me for a blowjob or tell me to get on top I feel the same shitty feeling I feel when at work I have to write silly little notes on the glovo box and the bartender complains: “How is your handwriting so bad? You’re a girl!”.

I think back to when I learned to write in fascist lettering, the convex letters, and I always added low scores and made a stress mark instead of dotting my i’s. Ilaria C. teached me when we used to steal uniposca markers at the mall. Then I went to high school and they made fun of me for being trash so I learned to write like Ilaria D., she let me copy our latin homework and she wanted to be a doctor. But now I’m not a doctor, I have to write on pink and yellow stickers “grazie Marta <3 “ or “enjoy the park” and I know my handwriting sucks but I AM NOT GOOD AT IT, same as with men: NOT GOOD AT IT.

So I’m sucking off this guy, who is only into me because I look like a teenage boy and he has a coke AND a cock problem (he doesn’t stay hard and he can’t come). I’m sucking his dick and he tells me he’s going to come and I panic. I don’t

want to choke or cough or throw up and all of a sudden I feel like I’m making markers squeak on plastic lids. My brain reacts to my fear, making me believe he’s already coming in my mouth and I taste something salty running down my throat and I don’t want to choke and I swallow and I think about how I hate that it gets stuck in your throat until the next day, even if you drink water, even if you eat, even if you throw up, even if you brush your teeth, it greases your throat like sink pipes when you pour the left-over tuna oil down the drain and it greases the pipes and it makes them rot. I swallowed, did he come yet? I try to keep sucking but my throat is rotten and my mouth is full and I don’t do it on purpose but I have to close it. He screams and punches me in the face and throws me against the closet. He’s mad, what the fuck. I laugh, or maybe I cry, snot becoming blood when it enters my mouth. “Sorry” I mean to say but I’m laughing so much and I’m just lying there, butt naked, breathless on the floor of this ugly cardboard house. I can’t stop laughing or I’m afraid I’ll wake up dead.

THIS IS A TONGUE IN CHEEK POEM
(MORE LIKE MY TONGUE IN YOUR CHEEK)

By KP

I think Jesus lives
in the space between my thighs.
I think we found him
when you touched me there.
I think if God wanted sex to be a sin
he shouldn't have made it feel
so goddamn good.
or maybe it's a damning God
kind of good
maybe it's neither
and God doesn't give a fuck if we fuck.

HUSSY

By Pamela Spradlin Mahajan

I lean forward in my armchair, hands pulling back printed curtains. The minivan's dirty tan hue flashes in the reflection of a streetlamp as I squint out the window, careful to ensure no lights are on in the house.

Just like four times that night and five times the previous one, the ominous vehicle slows as it reaches my two-story brick house, idles for several seconds, and speeds off, tires squealing as it disappears down the otherwise quiet street.

I bought a house as a twenty-four-year-old single female because I was making a solid salary. I always assumed I would purchase my first house with my partner, but I thought - why not?

Once I moved in, the young mothers pushing strollers past my front lawn narrowed their eyes at me suspiciously. *You're not supposed to be here*, they seemed to say.

The husbands of the young mothers ogled me when their wives were busy chasing toddlers down the sidewalk or buckling babies into car seats.

I didn't intend to live up to what my neighbors labeled me as, without taking the time to get to know me.

I glance at the phone in my lap, intending to google car makes so I can accurately describe the details to the police should an incident occur. Instead, my eyes are met with a message from Heath.

Hope we can still be friends.

I exhale in a rush of air.

Our residential proximity is how I met Heath. As I walked Betsy, my white-haired poodle, Heath was often watering his front lawn, or digging something from the rear of his crossover. I never saw a wife.

It occurred to me that Heath planned reasons to be outside whenever I was walking by. One day, he sauntered over, tilting his head to the side as he scratched his neck. He squatted down to pet Betsy, the morning sun glinting in his pale eyes.

"Good morning, Drea. Mind if I call you sometime, pick your brain about dogs? My kids have been on me to get one."

Heath was six-foot-one with nice shoulders, reddish-brown hair cut close to his skull, and a ready smile. He wore no wedding band. I freely shared my number with him.

Heath took me out to an Italian chain for our first and only date, then back to a nice hotel with a sweeping view and custom toiletries to fool around. The text I received from an unknown number two days later included threats and hateful names. When I confronted him, Heath admitted to being married as if he'd forgotten to mention he was forty instead of thirty-eight. Like it was a minor thing.

Legs tucked beneath myself, I glance up at the stark sky and take a sip of my Cabernet. Betsy is dozing at my feet, her breathing steady and slow.

My phone dings and I glance down at the device, half-expecting more hurled insults. But, once again, it's Heath.

If you see a blond woman in a minivan, don't open the door. My wife knows where you live. She's mad.

I flash on an image of my lifeless body leaking blood, my corpse discovered by my mom days after some horrific incident. The sordid tale gleefully ingested on primetime TV.

The minivan charges down the road once more, this time from the opposite direction. It slows in front of the house, idling longer than it has so far. As I lean forward, the driver's side window inches down. I'm aware of saliva building up inside my mouth, my throat closing. I swallow as the door swings open.

Heart slamming against my ribs, I slip out of the chair and drop to the floor. Hands clasped behind my neck, something sharp pierces my skin. When my fingers move to the spot, it's wet. Blood. Betsy jumps to attention, wet nose against the backs of my ears.

I eye the broken wine glass beside me, then glance up. A woman is standing outside the window. As Betsy barks ferociously, the woman wails, "*Stay away from my husband, you slut!*"

Hiding beneath the window in my own home, I feel as if I violated some secret code by moving into the neighborhood as a young, single woman.

They hated me before they knew me. They were determined to justify their hate. I've given them a reason.

ANIMA CHRISTI

By Emma Yahr

ANIMA CHRISTI

: Latin, meaning “soul of Christ;”
a private and passionate devotional

sanctified by the edge of salvation
pray to me like it’s a compulsion
lips trailing *amens*
up the flesh of my thigh

I can be tender if you ask me to

covenant of the curvature between the thumb and the
forefinger

I submit to your submission
small, soft, deciduous thing
this sin is not original to you or me

so move your mouth closer
I bid you

come to me —
kneel.

“Gambler Girl” by Whitney Phillips Photography,
modeled by Brittany Harris (she/her)



SEXUAL INVENTORY

By CM Wilson

trigger warning: BDSM

One girl. My lips squash into hers and I try to move them like I've seen it in the movies, taking in chunks of her bubble gum chapstick. Eight-year-olds know we aren't supposed to do this in our panties, but we know how to keep secrets.

One girl. Three boys. Weeks before the senior prom, they slide through my bedroom window, it doesn't take long for us all to undress. After it ends, I vigilantly perform sleep as one of them whacks off to himself. I pray that it's only in youth that endings disappoint beginnings.

One man. He wakes up at 6am, goes to the stock market. I'm 19 and just want to fucking do it already. I make sure he takes me on three dinner dates before I let him enter me, because, I am still my mother's daughter. We both live with our moms, so instead we lay out a blanket on the asphalt of the neighborhood park's basketball court. And I lose my phallic virginity to a republican who believes in guns and maidens.

One boy. Our lips never touch. He fucks me from behind. I had wanted it, so I don't let myself cry the next day.

One girl. The magenta sky folds into midnight on the red sea, and we drink into its horizon. It's the very first time my fingertips caress a wet clit, and it makes me feel like myself. The next day she denies it, tells everyone I'm gay, and she's not. Puts me off clit for a little while.

One man. Knee-deep in the sea, my legs wrap around his pelvic hips opening onto his cock, we rock. So, I ask him if he loves me. He answers eight days later and we love each other for two wholesome years, tossing in between soft white sheets from Paris to Beirut.

One man. After 24 years of life, I think my body, my clit is just malfunction, cause I couldn't ever release it, achieve it. Once upon a night, I straddle his brawny back. I let myself guide the pleasure until a stunning ripple of pulse contracts in concentric circles through my skin. Hadn't figured out my own body, 'cause I had always been trying to please his. Just how many orgasms has this patriarchy swallowed?

One person. We've been pals. They like to dom. And I'm like, that's cool. I can do this. Oh god. How do I have a vulva, but I don't know how to touch a vulva? "Turquoise" doesn't roll off my tongue too easily during the choking.

One self. I'm a student and it's a study Sunday. I'm trying to give more attention to my textbook, than my libido. I'm crotch down on a patch of grass overlooking the library. There aren't too many people around, so I let my hips furtively indulge in the firmness of ground until – mmmhmmmm.

One woman. Location: night club closet. My head rolls back, and I'm pressed in between two amplifiers and a broom stick, and so we're booming and brooming. A man ruffles the curtains outside, so we scramble to the nearest bathroom. She spreads me, and my ass figures out the toilet seat. Outside of the stall we must look like a four-legged lesbian octopus out of water. We get it on, then: dance floor.

One woman. Our bodies slide into one another, the carnal crevasses just fit. When I taste her, she's releasing blood, and I still want all of her fluids. Immersed in our glide, only the window's glow lets us know this day has elapsed again. We refuel with yogurt and stale bread, use what's left to do it again. The sex evolves into a season of sweetness with fig trees and bike rides and ice-cream cones, strap-ons and sweat, and just so much of her, never enough of her. I didn't just want to fuck women, I wanted to love them too.

One woman. Best friend. We play, we cum, we high five.

One woman. Aquarius, arrogant, artist. Eleven more years of life, and she knows how to lean in, puts her nipple in between my thighs. My inner and outer lips engulf her tender breast to the beat of our breath. And they fuck, her nipple. My clit.

One man. His arms lift me against the door's entrance. I feel like I'm in Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights, and I want to fuck a man for the first time in years. So we do. And, there I am - my lips stroking his limp dick, paying more attention to stroking his ego, assuring him I won't fall in love with him, justifying intimacy. Sigh, I'm way too over this toxic masculinity shit.

Two women. Together we became water. In the fluid flow of our flesh, I felt, yes, yes, we were meant to share like this.

Oneself. Writing an inventory.

BOOKS

FLOOZIES: FEMME FATALES ARE

FIGHTING BACK

by Geraldine Comiskey

BAD FEMINIST

by Roxanne Gay

THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE

by Gay Talese

REAL LIFE NUDE GIRL

by Carol Queen

THE HAPPY HOOKER

by Xaviera Hollander

WITCHES, SLUTS, FEMINISTS

by Kristen J. Sollee

PODCASTS

GUYS WE FUCKED: THE

ANTI SLUT SHAMING

PODCAST

2 DOPE QUEENS

BANGING BOOK CLUB

YEAR OF THE SLUT

NEWZY FLOOZIES



MOVIES / TV

P-VALLEY

ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK

INSECURE

BOTTOMS

WHY WOMEN KILL

THE TO DO LIST

BUT I'M A CHEERLEADER

WATER LILIES

HUSTLERS

COVEN CONGRESS

The concept of a witch originated from a societal fear and hatred of independent women. Any woman who dared to challenge societal order, to not have children, to take up work outside the home, to think for herself was tortured and burned. Though the punishment is less explicit, the hatred of the witch remains.

In defiance of this stigma, we are reclaiming the word. We are witches and the Coven Congress is our little sabbath. For each edition, we gather witches from all walks of life to talk about our experiences, opinions, and ideas. Next, we let the discussion inspire content included in *They Call Us*. Coven Congress allows us to amplify the voices of a variety of women and gender minorities so the world can hear and learn from our tales.

Special thanks to our Coven Congress participants, for bravely sharing their stories and allowing us to use them as inspiration, and for pretending to put pants on after a long Zoom work day so we could safely debunk the patriarchy from the comfort of our homes.

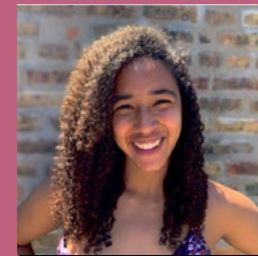
OUR TEAM



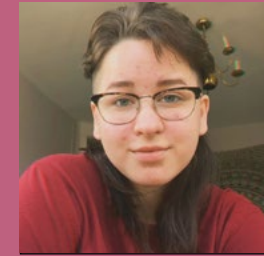
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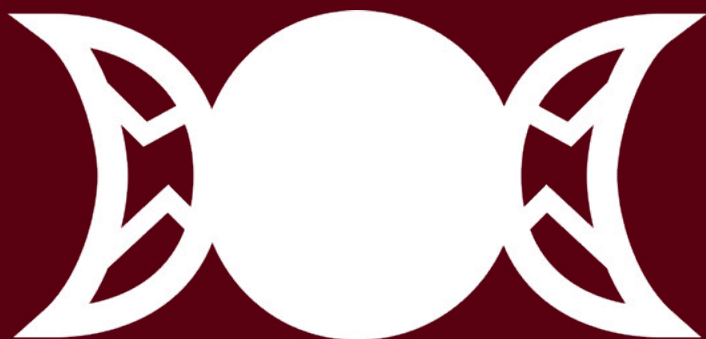


Asko Skladany
Illustrator

OUR PATREON

They Call Us is a not-for-profit organization. To fund our magazine, we've created a Patreon page and a merch shop. By donating through Patreon you will receive exclusive invites to Coven Congress, Patreon only merch, sneak peeks into upcoming editions, and access to a feminist only discord group. Please consider donating on our [Patreon](#), purchasing merch [online](#), or just sharing this magazine with friends.

They Call Us is a passion project for our team members and, although we do not make any money through the zine, it helps our organization to host events, donate to other feminist causes, and support our contributing writers and artists.



THEY CALL US

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If you're interested in submitting work for our next edition, please email us at theycalluszine@gmail.com or visit our website at theycallus.com.

Thank you for reading!