

## Woman: The Derivative

Glossy magazine in the first aisle of  
Woolies metro, Kings Cross,  
Calling out to the girls with a bottle of chewing gum and an iced coffee in each hand,  
Her sceptre and her orb.

In lieu of agony aunt is bilious pink print,  
dotted with hearts and kisses,  
As if to disguise the malicious message:

*To be thin*

*To be bony*

Girl becomes skeletal,  
Ribs thrusting their way into taut pink skin.

Because that's all she was,

Moons ago she was a bloodied bone  
resting in the palm of a man

who cast his eyes disdainfully at this future insubordinate,

Mutineer, with her tumbling curls and curious eyes.

To embrace the fleshy body of her womanhood is to forget the sacrifice he so kindly  
made,

To give her one rib.

Just one, from his collection of twenty-four.

Recognise his malaise, his pain, in a display of ravenous gratitude,

Show him you love him:

Starve.

Show him your ribs.

His ribs.

## Murchenmutter

Chastise me with your knowledge

I know I am young, and I am naive

Are you jealous of my naivety?

I am not naive

I am corrupted by the eyes of the man on my train

His gaze reaches up my skirt

And spreads his “knowledge” like margarine

Between my thighs

My mother hands me a napkin

Instead of a knife

I can still feel the oily welt when my legs brush together

The self-help magazine basking on the coffee table

Tells me the fat collecting around my hips

Cannot be decoration of a life lived

It is distasteful: as if my thighs are gaudy tapestries hung in a simple house

Generously they discuss and dissect each way

That I can slice off my skin, without quite reaching the bone

*Because you don't want to look sick, do you?*

This time my mother hands me a knife

And not a napkin to dry my tears

Or to dry my blood

And this time my thighs don't rub together

But I can still feel the open wound when my hand brushes my rib

And when my mother finally smiles

## Pulp Fiction

I'd let you pull me apart like orange segments,  
If you asked  
Peel off my hard outside layer and discard it  
You know me and my seeds and cloying acidity  
But I suppose I do have more to offer under the tough epicarp if you want to juice me,  
Pulpy and thick and vulnerable  
Leave me sliced in half and dry  
I would let you, if only to support that vitamin C deficiency you're always moaning  
about  
Smile, baby, glow, baby  
Press me against the juicer  
Sugar dripping down the sides  
Will anybody want my saggy rind  
My shapeless form  
Wait, don't leave me here!  
The juice is in your throat and your throat sails off the balcony  
Maybe I'm compostable  
No, the worms don't like citrus  
I won't upset their stomachs, like I upset yours

## Empirical Recount on Abstinence

*...does not my heat astound you. And my light. All by myself I am a huge  
camellia. Glowing and coming and going, flush on flush.*

-Plath, Fever 103

Corporeal plaything,  
Carnally metallic and brimming, bubbling  
A little teapot with a burning hot handle  
A girl sitting on the fire with singed eyelashes,  
Hear her shout, blow her steam like a Plinian eruption  
Soaring, as the boys clasp bloody clumps of feathers  
In each fist.  
Choropleth skin in melting pseudocolour  
Green light blooming against your waist,  
Come, here, rest your lips on my amygdala,  
Don't be mean.  
Forkful of fattened calf,  
The juices run down my chin like summerfruit  
Crushed like a walnut, naked  
on the kitchen table  
Solace seeks those who open their blinds on Sunday Mornings

