

the WOOVE

spring 2015 part III

excerpts from
Blonde
Julia Lattimer

I.

My tiny pink hand ruffled through the crowd of shiny Barbies in a blue box on my closet floor. I found tiny, pink high-heels, and tiny, pink mirrors. I saw big, plastic red cars and small, plastic clothing irons.

One by one, I pulled each Barbie from the box by her hair. Some of the hair was braided. Some were pulled into a ponytail or back behind a headband. Some of the hair was curly and most of it was straight. All of the hair felt lifeless and dry, like lengthened bristles from my little pink toothbrush. All of the hair, with absolutely no exceptions, was blonde—like mine.

I laid each of my Barbies out in a row and counted thirteen. Behind the dolls sat my kid scissors, my 8 magic markers, and my Elmer's glue. In protest, I began. I cut all of the hair off of the first Barbie, so only little shrubs stuck up at the scalp. With a Crayola marker, I dyed her punk pixie cut a bright purple. I gave the second doll black hair with the use of a thick Sharpie. I gave the third green streaks. The fourth doll had the curly blonde hair I cut off of the first doll glued to her chin for a beard. I cut all of the hair off the fifth and sixth dolls and glued it all around the seventh's waist for a hula skirt. The eighth Barbie got a "bob" cut, which I think meant it looked like my mom's hair and not my brother, Bob's. The ninth got hair like my brother's, though. I took my pink marker and colored the ninth's hair in fury, since my brother said he hated pink. The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth got red white and blue hair, to say thank you to my country. And the thirteenth I left alone, so I could remember what I looked like.

IV.

I couldn't stand my hair. My beautiful, long, straight, blonde hair kept me awake at night. At 1:30 am the light did not threaten me, so I listened to music and walked around my room. At 2 I was sleepily looking through old photos, with pictures of my sisters and I, three bobbing blonde heads, ushered to silence in a photograph. At 2:30 I was scared of the light in my hair, but I used it to help me read. Reading always put me to sleep.

At 3 in the morning, I was in agony. The light pulsed through my head. Even when I had my eyes closed to try and sooth my hungry headache, I could still see the light from above me through the red shield of my eyelids. At 3:30 I was desperate. I pulled my hair into a bun and covered it up with a soft hat. Just when I finally drifted to sleep, a strand of hair—a beam of light fell free of the hat and shocked me back into consciousness.

I was hopeless against my hair at 4 am. I laid on my back with a pillow over my eyes and thought of no solution. I vaguely remembered chopping all of my hair off in the middle of the night, once. Could I ever stand the light? I wondered if I turned the light off in my closet, if I could still see any hair shining up from the carpet floor. I wasn't young enough to get away with that anymore. I couldn't chop off my hair and go to high school the next day with Elmer's glue dried up on my head. But I needed to sleep, so I needed to get rid of the light in my hair.

My solution was simple: At 4:30 I crawled out of bed. My feet barely touched the carpet, as I drifted silently from my room to the stairs, then the kitchen and out the door. I found the keys to my car, buried deep in my pocket and locked them in place at the ignition. I had to surrender some silence to my engine, which roared loudly into the sleeping silence. I jumped quickly to turn down the radio, which was blasting Kanye at full volume. My hair outshined the headlights as I pulled away from my house.

The drugstore had "24 HOURS" twitching a fluorescent red. I ran inside, bought the cheapest bottle of hair dye called "Darkest Brown," and rushed back out to the car. I was back inside by my house by 5, never having made a peep. I figured that the blonde holds the light that keeps me up at night, but if I was brunette by 6, I could finally get some sleep.



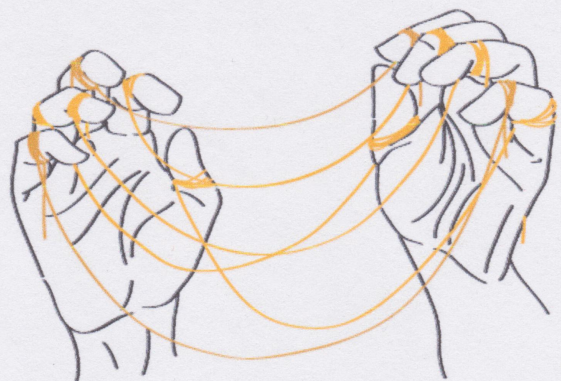
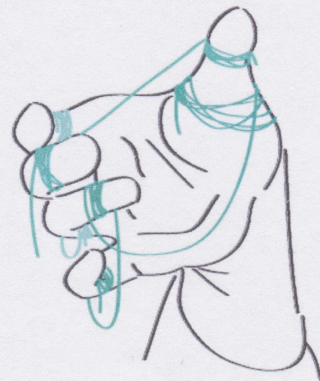
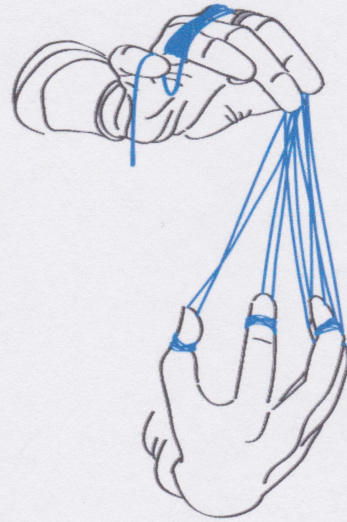
Kathleen Martin

Dissonance
Aidan Hughes

I never understood why
my mother wanted to leave the home I grew up in
She still does, and every year is going to be the year
she packs our things and moves to Virginia
The house was much too small for her,
which baffled me because
I always had plenty of room returning from school
to strip off layers of bags and books and bulky coats
as if shedding my skin from the day
spreading it out as I walked
staking a claim in every room of the house

I also didn't understand why she said
that he wasn't coming home that night
How could a six year old understand heartbreak
when my whole world existed within
the crisp smell of sunlight bouncing off fresh basil
grown on the windowsill of a kitchen while
plunky notes from the piano
bounced against the walls which contained them and
Him

I think that as we left and explored the outside world
parts of it crept back into ours until eventually
we had to start hiring a piano tuner
to adjust the strings every month because our walls
could no longer sustain the same notes
they did when we were children



Car Seat Headrest

Review by Harrison Grinnan

I like being invited into other people's worlds and feeling their feelings as if they are my own. My favorite singer-songwriter is John Darnielle aka The Mountain Goats. I've read his book; I have played a different Mountain Goats song on my show every week on WUVT and will continue to do so for a while. When he sings about living without someone after living with them on *Get Lonely* I pretended my shitty 16 year old relationship issues were similar. In high school at the peak of my angst I listened to a lot of Shostakovich as if the struggles I faced as a suburban teenager who had trouble communicating with his parents were similar to that of a man who lived directly in the crosshairs of Stalin but still had the strength to create subversive art. I'm now an old man, emotionally fully formed at 19 years, but I still enjoy music designed for catharsis. Car Seat Headrest is music for catharsis.

Car Seat Headrest is Will Toledo, a lo-fi/psychedelic songwriter from Leesburg, Virginia who releases long albums via bandcamp. I first heard *Twin Fantasy*, an hour-long album about an imagined homosexual relationship with a doppelganger. The songs frequently build to a repeated chorus and stretch outwards in length as if they belong on a Titus Andronicus album. It is about being horribly alone "I pretended I was drunk when I came out to my friends/I never came out to my friends", desperate, "teenage hands will never touch yours again", nostalgic, "we gotta go back"x17, and in love. It's a voyeuristic journey into a messed up mind and it's calming.

Starving While Living is an EP that lasts only 21 minutes and 5 songs. "It's Just Sex" lays out the argument that sex doesn't have to mean anything, although the narrator doesn't sound particularly convinced. "Reuse the Cels" imagines life as a series of movie stills that grow more faded as they are reused, ending in a chorus of ah's and synthesizer swells that somehow don't sound out of place. "I Hate Living" proclaims, "I wish I was drunk/I wish I was less here/I need to be more drunk/or be less here". The instrumentals are interesting and more diverse, although still definitively lo-fi. *Nervous Young Man* is the last Car Seat Headrest release I've listened to closely. "We Can't Afford Your Depression Anymore" lays out the sadness but "I Can Play The Piano" is the highlight of the album for me. Over rolling guitar, Will sets out that "The time has come to feel good about yourself/You have your own skin and bones to call yourself" and that "You're an adult and you can't starve yourself to death/You've got to seek help if you're chronically depressed/But you're the only one who can say what's for the best/So close your ears/And do not hear me now". The album continues on (it's a two hour affair) but that point of affirmation is the high point for me, even if it is undercut later ("Plane Crash Blues (I Can't Play the Piano)").

Lo-fi and melancholy sometimes go hand in hand, but on Car Seat Headrest releases they're in a grown-up relationship with loud fights, bursts of passion, and long periods of peaceful coexistence. I love these songs. Hearing the small details of other people's lives comforts. The soft melancholic sadness building into more passionate emotions has a catharsis that is deeply calming. This is self-aware art that avoids irony.

"It's not going to happen/It's not going to work out"

"Good stories make bad lives"



Image courtesy of Car Seat Headrest and Cate Wurtz



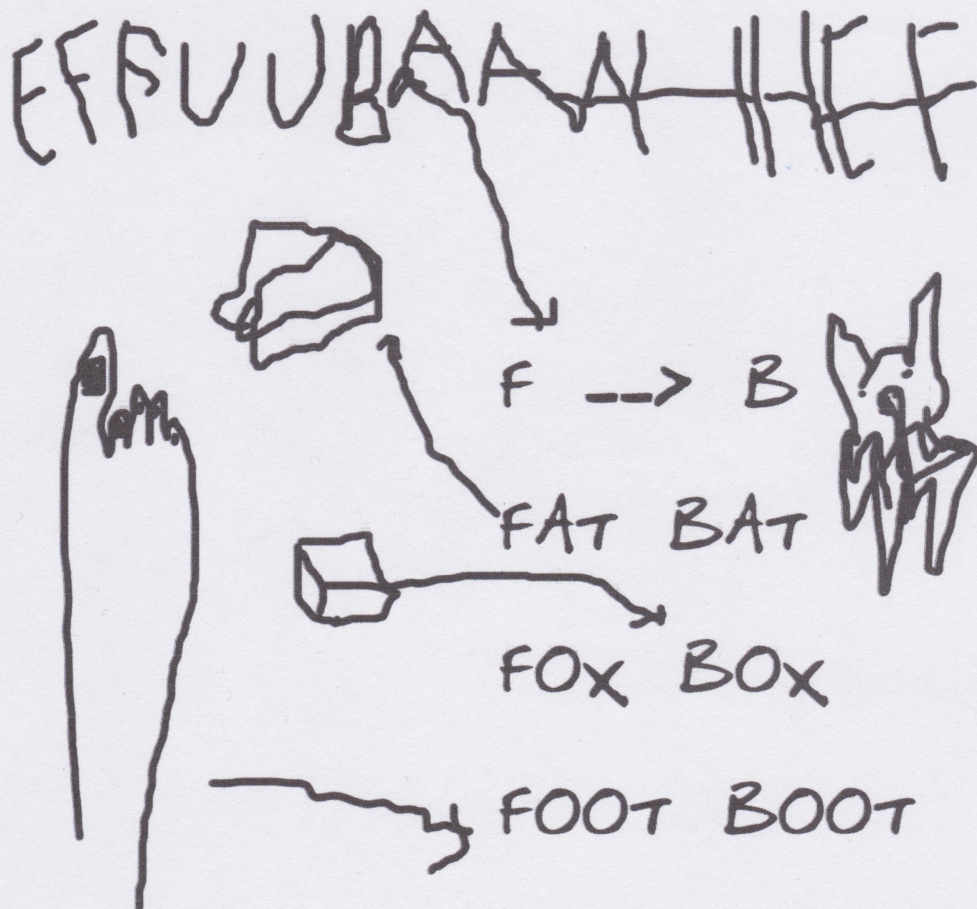
Dakota Campbell

Too Loose
Chris Ventura

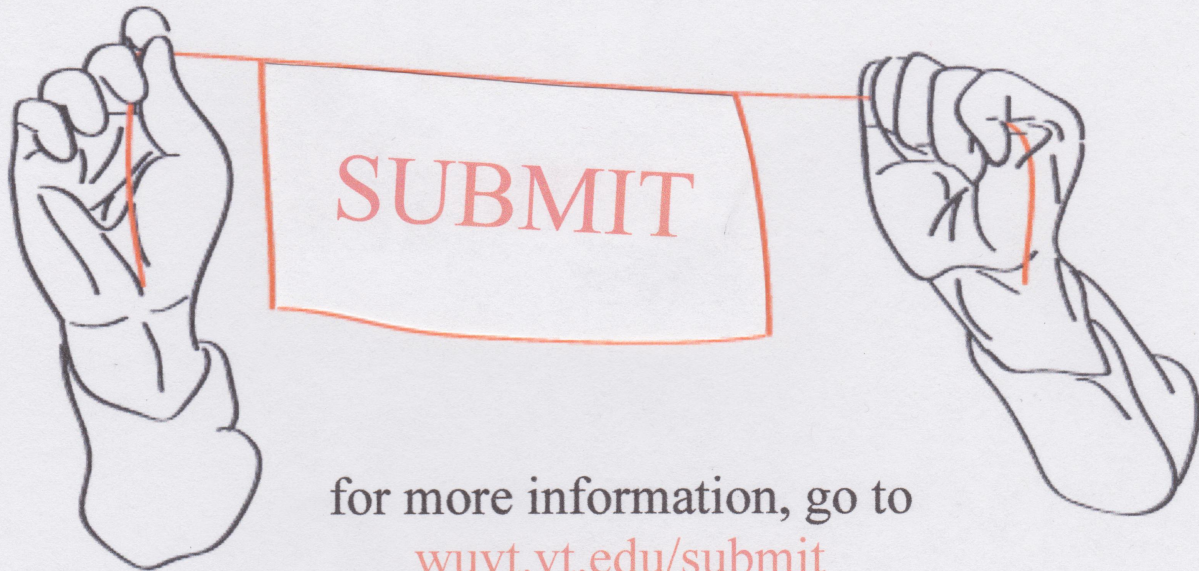
She had band aids on
her body and her brain.
Between the sobs
I heard it.

"Nobody loves me."

But at the time all I knew for sure was that
Mom wasn't going to be able to make me dinner tonight.

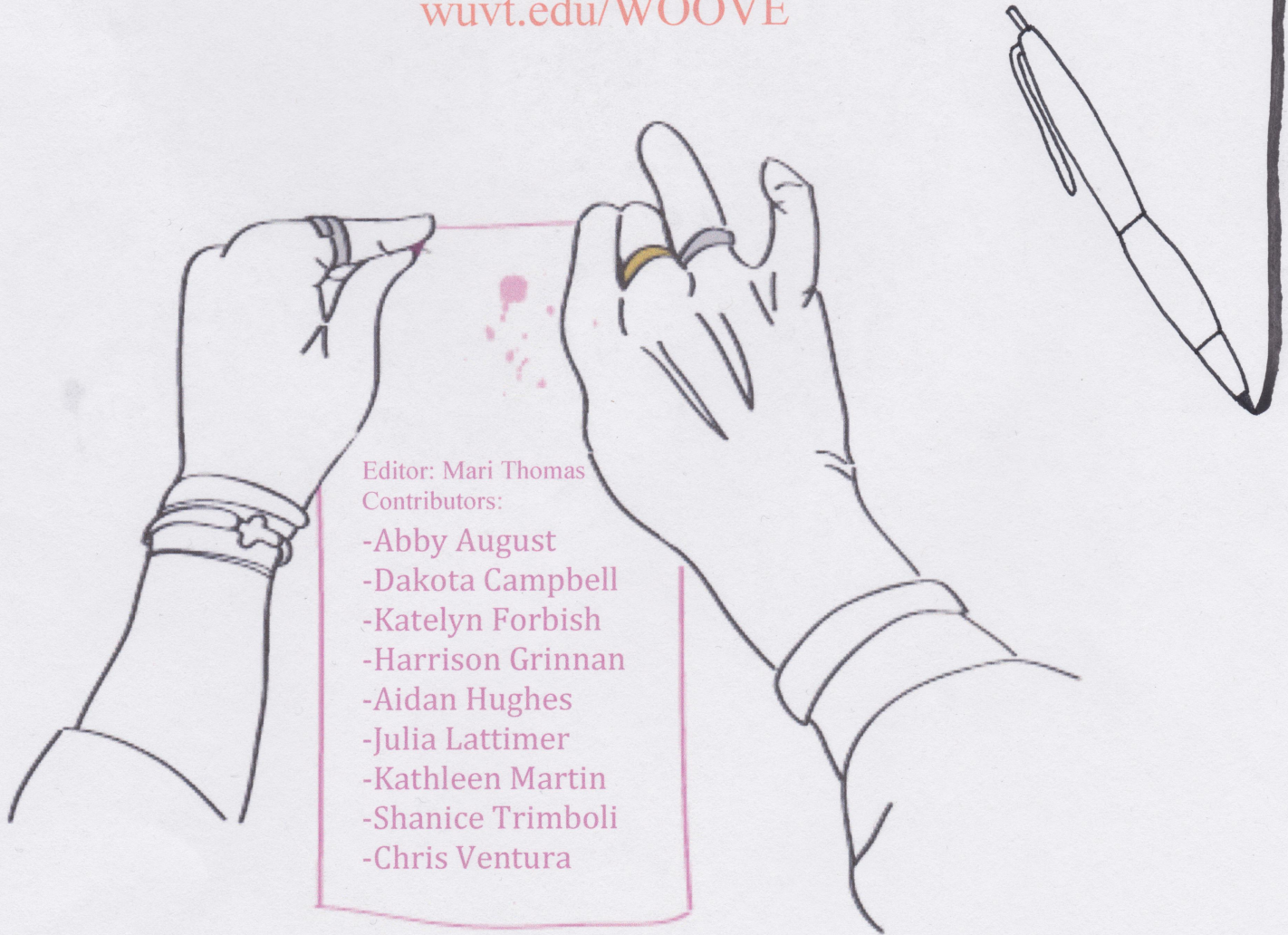


Shanice Trimboli



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