



**turtle and gorilla**  
*by leslie & stacey bull with the family*

## eight years old

i'm watching my mother put on her false eyelashes  
later i see her lying still on the floor. her head looks funny. is she dead?  
my father, out of breath, says she is just resting, i should go back to bed. and i do  
terror eating holes in my heart, i lay shivering as my mother dies. i loathe myself for  
not saving her but she  
gets up later, not dead, just beaten unconscious for awhile.  
i watch while she vomits her cereal back into her bowl  
so she can be thin

*leslie 11/99*



leslie, jeff & mom, 1970

*this zine is dedicated to my brother, jeffrey scott olson,  
february 19, 1963 – july 12, 1981.  
i love you.*

## Riddles & Bios

What happens when you have a married couple consisting of two “women” who are “dykes” but neither has ever been in a relationship with a lesbian?

What happens when one of the “women” is a queer straight girl ex hooker and the other one is a man?

Both in college, one math major and one women’s studies, both former junkies, both from the street, both crazy, both hardcore. One white, one Jew. One from East coast, one from West. One mixed class, one working class, both poor. Sexy, powerful, articulate, intelligent, and talented. Deeply, passionately in love, true soul mates, true survivors.

Leslie Bull, age 39

I was born into a both loving and abusive home, and had both white and middle class privilege until age twelve when my parents’ divorce catapulted me into a lower economic stratum. After dropping out of school at fourteen and having three babies by nineteen I worked as a hooker off and on for a dozen years from age twenty to age thirty-two. I mostly worked the streets where dealing with a sexist culture, unsafe working conditions, police brutality, and whore stigma made prostitution a very difficult job. I played cat and battered mouse with the cops, dealt with sometimes difficult and occasionally dangerous tricks, and with the lowly street status of being white girl and ho, got raped, got beat up, got jailed, delved into real crime for awhile, and due at least in part to stigma and oppression got involved with a lifestyle that ate up my profits and drained my health. I also experienced power and control, made the most money per hour of any job I’ve ever had, became strong and independent in some very crucial ways, and forged and transformed an identity that always has and always will be a huge part of who I am.

Hooker. I take this name from those who would use it against me, to discredit me, to erase me, to make it impossible to rape me, or marry me, or let me be a mother. From those who would save me, those who would imprison me, and those who would dig my shallow grave. Hooker. I take this name, hold it tight, close to my heart. Take it as I cook oatmeal, kiss my husband, write poetry, feed the cat, study for finals, sell unWORN panties online, and brush the hair from my son’s eyes. I take hooker and absorb it, bathe in it, lick it, tease it, flip it, tip it, and insert it gently into my satin pink pussy. I take this name hooker and make it all mine, change its very meaning until no one can ever use it to hurt me again.



Stacey Bull, age 33

“My biggest claim to fame in childhood was being born in the same room as Epstein from ‘Welcome Back Kotter’ in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Other than that my childhood was being the Jewish free lunch kid, the kind of Jewish kid no one hears about, getting the Lion’s Club glasses, moving in the middle of the night, stealing candy, and playing on the rooftops and streets of Jersey and New York. I suffered extreme, repeated physical, sexual, and emotional trauma at the hands of my mother and the men she put around me, and was thrown in and out of foster homes, mental institutions, and detention centers. By age thirteen I was on my own, a hardcore punk street rat, hooked on smack and running dope with an oi boy attitude and a baby face. Suicidal, looking for a place to belong, and knowing I was primarily attracted to women, I tried out the lesbian scene and soon realized I didn’t belong. The dykes realized it too. Instead, I wound up being brought in and accepted by the gay man’s community. The underground. Theirs was the community that recognized and accepted me as a man. Still, I eventually ended up taking on a butch dyke identity because I had this giant pussy and I liked woman, besides they all said it fit and I didn’t know any different. I thought that eventually something would happen and I would grow the male parts. It never occurred to me that I could be recognized as a man while having a giant pussy. Until recently, I never really understood what the word “trans” meant.

“Ever since I remember I knew I was a boy. I never questioned it. Waited for my penis to grow. As a kid I was a boy, collected baseball cards, kissed girls in closets, practiced karate, and fought

bullies. I was always falling for some girl, Dawn, Jodi, Kathy, Bridget, by second grade I was carrying their books after school and stealing candy for them on the way home. I dreamed of being a shape shifter, of vampires that would come in the night and transform me into a boy. To this day I know I am a man. I still don't question it, only other people do."

This is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of Stacey and mines' lives, our pasts, and our amazing four year relationship. From my taking on and then transforming a dyke identity, to Stacey's recent, complicated decision to begin transitioning more publicly to a man, from his d.i.d. to my p.t.s.d., from my police record to Stacey being declared criminally insane, from my activism in the whore revolution to Stacey's courage and ordeals in the face of transphobia, from our raising five kids, including two in adult prison, to our hot, once in a lifetime love affair, our stories speak to fundamental issues of family, class, gender, race, stigma, privilege, identity politics, sex, love, desire and so much more.

Please meet our family:

*note: These bios were all dictated to me so they are a combo of my punctuation and spelling along with some of theirs; for example, Dennis had to spell several words for me, and Tyler told me all his punctuation, Cheris, on the other hand, expressed great appreciation that her work (both the bio and her piece, Moet) appeared on the computer screen effortlessly spelled correctly and expressed that this is the first time her work has ever been typed up and she feels it makes her work more accessible. The text of the bios is pretty much word for word as dictated to a parental unit.*

Tyler McDonald

The first six years of my life I lived with my mom and my two brothers. I guess we were poor but I didn't really notice. I have a twin brother. I've always wanted us to be different. I'm me. Not two people. Just me. I love to play basketball. I love to play sports. I tend to go to extremes. I usually have to be burned a few times before I learn my lesson. I like to stand out a little bit. Conformity is boring. I went to live with my grandfather when I was six. I spent a lot of time growing up trying to break away from what was expected of me. Living with my grandpa provided me with middle class



status.

At seventeen I began a new life. One that has seen a lot of change in me. I went from being at the top of the social hierarchy—white, heterosexual, middle-class male—to the very bottom, a convicted felon. Now I stand on the brink of two worlds. I want to be a voice that's heard but I won't try to fit into any categories. I won't make it easy to ignore me.

I love to write and to read. I want to learn everything and to understand myself. Jazz speaks to me right now. I hate expectations. When I'm old I want to be proud of the life I've lived. I know how it feels to be the object of hatred. I don't want to hate anybody. Only the system that oppresses me. I believe I can make a difference.

Michael McDonald

I'm 22 now and I like to watch movies with my girlfriend and her friend. I like to share whole chickens with my step mom. I like to watch dvd's and smoke pot.



Jennifer Tahnazanie

I'm Jen. I'm 20, about to be 21, and I was born in Chinle, Arizona. I like to bitch about movies. I like to bitch about movies with my best friend. Sometimes reading. I like to draw. Hopefully I'll get a job soon.

Dennis McDonald

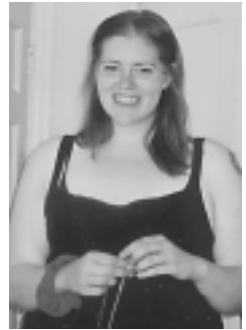
I am an incarcerated middle class white man that plays basketball, writes poetry, fist fights, is gentle with animals, and reads incessantly. Despite surroundings of repression I enjoy the beauty of a walk at sunrise. At any given moment one could find me with my feet up, relaxing to a good novel with Rachmaninoff or Diana Krall playing quietly in the background. Or at the next, smashing to Slipnot

and jerking up weights in the weight room. I am a middle class white man that does not claim to be anything else because I know all the words on Bob Marley's album *Legend*, or because I enjoy reading Ralph Ellison, Asha Bandele, Joy Harjo, and James Baldwin. I strive only to live, survive, and learn while subjected to arbitrary humiliations, and subtle tortures. Both of which others in this country, that are not middle-class white males, live with outside of these bars. My status does not minimize hardships that are very real in my every day life. They exist together. My athletics exist right next to my poetry. My violence exists along with my gentility. My suffering and my privilege go hand in hand, existing next to my love and anger. And the barbed wire that towers threateningly in the horizon shares the sky with the earth's canvas, as She paints the sunrise.



## Cheris Remines

Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger and I've already died. I'm 20 years old, today is the first day of the rest of my life. The decisions I make now are life-changingly important., I can go anywhere. But where will I go?





michael, jen & best friend amy, 2000



michael, age 6  
best self manager award 1986-87



## Turtle and Gorilla

Being the partner of a person whose identity is multispecific gender  
queer

f to m

and in some intricate ways m to f

what I must first do

is recognize my own transphobia.

As a teenager,

I laughed with my gay uncle

at the androgynous (to us)

person

who rented me a room at a bad motel—

shame flung off cruelly

sticks to us

running down our arms like hot pitch.

Being the partner of a person with multiple identities

means I am the partner, lover, girlfriend, boyfriend, friend, trusted

adult, comrade, sister, slut girl

of dyke, gender queer, straight, gay boy, kids

and adults, and more

much more.

Having my own mental abilities (as opposed to illness)

that sprang up in response to terrorist tactics

means my partner

is the partner of kaleidoscope woman

ever changing and rolling with the moves

we explore the terrain—

And she is all her complex, glorious selves—artist mangician mathemati-  
cian

Being an X hooker means my partner and I navigate the places called  
capp st, called grand, called the stroll, called the strip in all the cities

I saw s. f., l. a., new orleans, pheonix, vegas, and all the rest of  
those times with blood in my hair and needles in my arms

and now I'm a vegan slut girl

transformed

a yogi of slut girl love

I like to read, stand on my head, smoke weed, bounce tummies, eat red

swiss chard in the summer and chickweed in the spring

I like to watch my partner do calculus, glancing up from my book

at the smooth thickness of her neck

and the slope of her shoulder

as they combine

to make my heart sing and my pussy drip

Being the partner of a person who was a gender queer thrown out street  
kid, junkie, gay bashed almost to death  
and then tried to kill herself, all by the time she was 16  
means being the partner of a psychiatric survivor  
hospitalized many times  
means two survivors supporting and loving one another  
slut girl and raging bull  
turtle and gorilla  
Being a teen welfare mom, mother of four (three birthed and one found,  
all drug through hell and back)  
means my partner is now loving four intelligent, creative, angry, trying,  
hurt, sweet, courageous, powerful teenagers with me  
including one that lives under racist siege,  
another who was the victim of a “smear the queer” bashing attack based  
on his perceived sexual orientation,  
and two held hostage in a maximum security adult prison  
where we pretend we are sisters when we visit  
give each other furtive looks and reassuring smiles  
“hey sis, mom always loved you best,” we joke  
And back home we swear we won’t lecture, and then we lecture, and the  
kids roll their eyes pityingly behind our backs  
our lack of control pathetic, really.  
and we all pile back in the truck for the six hour drive back to the prison  
we fight and cry and love one another  
get tattooed with each others names  
play cards  
wait

*by leslie w 10/00*



*for my girl leslie. love, anastasia*

## **I knew**

*by Stacey Bull 8/01*

from the first time I laid eyes on you  
I knew we would be something else  
the way we connected right off  
everyone noticed it  
I did too  
I was excited by you  
by the way you talked  
the way you stood  
strong in the doorway  
your presence filled the room  
when you sat down  
close to me  
close enough for your thigh to touch  
my thigh  
yes  
I noticed  
we talked  
for hours  
animated  
alive inside  
with so many connections  
subtle and otherwise  
you kept me  
wanting more  
eager to see you again  
the more we spent time  
the more I knew  
there was no doubt  
I had to be with you  
you started to stir  
new hope inside  
woke me up  
made me see  
a life with love  
full of possibility  
as days go by  
I feel it all the more  
so much in love with you  
want to tell it to the world  
so here we stand  
our bond so strong  
where I pledge my love  
to the one I belong

## Flesh Wounds

Last night Stacey and I both had dreams.

We woke up this morning telling each other our dreams.

Then we called Joseph and told him about our dreams,  
and it was during that telling, with our dreams pouring out over two  
phone extensions,

that the connections really began to dawn.

Stacey's dream:

We're stuck in an elevator and Stacey is going to rescue us by climbing  
out the top.

She starts to go through a hole in the ceiling but she is "too big" and she  
gets stuck and I have to push her out and it is hard because I am  
short and I have to jump and push at the same time.

At one point Stacey thinks to herself "huh, I'm not going to make it out."  
Then I push her again, hard, her shirt rips, her right side gets scraped  
and bleeds.

It hurts, then suddenly she is free and begins to climb the elevator shaft  
"like a crazy ape woman."

It is hard at first to grasp the cables, but after three or four pulls it  
becomes easy and she is amazed

by her own apelike strength.

At the top of the shaft she steps off onto a ledge and begins to pull the  
elevator up by its cables.

She pulls it up and up until...there I am, standing on top of the elevator,  
and we walk off holding hands.

Stacey says, "I think I was an ape person in the dream. I was wearing  
clothes though.

I had on an orange shirt."

It is later and I am only now

writing down my dream two weeks since I wrote the above.

I still remember it.

My dream:

Stacey and I are standing near a door at some big warehouse type place.

I'm not sure what we're doing there, but all of a sudden this totally  
random white guy appears at the door

holding a small black gun, pointing it at us.

I am scared and Stacey and I both start to say like "hey what are you  
doing" and hold our hands

up in front of us and the man says "what would you do if I gave you  
this gun?"

And he looks at us crazy like he despises us and says "you're so scared  
you wouldn't do shit"

and I'm thinking "fuck, he's going to kill us"

and the next thing I know he hands the gun to Stacey who (before I can even finish thinking “what an idiot this guy is”) immediately points it at him and shoots him in the foot.  
As she’s shooting him the guy dives out of view and then comes back up holding this enormous AK 47 or something and we’re like “fuck” and we turn and run and run through the building and through other buildings and we are being chased by one, by many cops too, until they morph back into one..shadowy..male..figure, and as we run he is gaining on us and we finally come to a room at the end of a hall and I look inside and there are no doors or windows and nowhere left to run and I think “this is it, we’re going to die here” and as I enter the room I turn to say, “at least we will die together” and it is then I find Stacey is not by my side, didn’t follow me into the room, and my heart... fills with love as I realize she has stayed outside to protect me, she is shouting, fighting.  
I hear a shot, run out and look around, find our pursuer vanished.  
I see Stacey lying on the ground and rush over to her.  
She is shot in the side and bleeding and I am scared until I realize, it is only a flesh wound, and she is going to be fine. I feel safe, happy, and secure, deeply loved and deeply in love, as I wake to our real-life embrace.

*by Leslie w 3/01*

## **1st day**

that very first day  
you had me shook  
got my attention  
yeah, got me hooked

caught my eye  
ain't let go since  
got me wild  
and all up in a twist

you got me girl  
spinnin' like a top  
you get me all worked up  
steady and non-stop

you keep me going  
with your ever lovin' smile  
never wanna go without  
I'd walk a trillion miles

ain't got all the words  
tell'n how I feel  
'cept I know your the one  
baby, your the real deal

say you'll marry me  
and be my wife  
give you all my love  
for the rest of my life

*by Stacey Bull aka Pony Boy 8/01*

## **My Point is Nothing, Just Having Fun on the Stage**

My point is not about Daily Personal Hell.

It's not about restrooms and peeing standing up.

It's not about labels and pronouns and other gender specific stuff.

It's not about society's rules and religions.

It's not about passing, therapy, and the Harry Benjamin gender dysphoria list.

It's not about mutilation, hurting myself, or wishing I was dead.

It's not about suicide, facedown, pool of red.

It's not about when other people don't believe who I am.

It's not about society feeling afraid or sorry for me.

It's not about being wrong, deviant, or freak.

It's not about my genitals or the size of my chest.

It's not about being afraid to show who I am.

It's not about street kids, my youth thrown aside.

It's not about rejection from family and friends.

It's not about calling myself a dyke or a fag because they say it fits.

It's not about legal marriage and the benefits of straight everybody else.

It's not about being starved for information and f to m surgery pics.

It's not about her I mean him, or she I mean he...or...oh whatever.

It's not about all of this getting inside all of me.

My point is not about internalized transphobia.

It's not about apartment, job, or education discrimination.

It's not about fearing for my life and being bashed in the park.

It's not about being disrespected or treated as less worthy.

It's not about being told I won't get a functioning penis.

It's not about the lack of medical research or the politics of transphobia and sexism that keep medicine from really helping me.

It's not about no insurance coverage for gender identity disorder.

My point is not about being called a disorder.

It's not about jumping through mental hoops, paying out the ass, and listening to their shit.

It's not about needing a note from the shrink to get tit surgery.

It's not about two way, bilateral, dichotomatic gender system.

It's not about running away from the word trans.

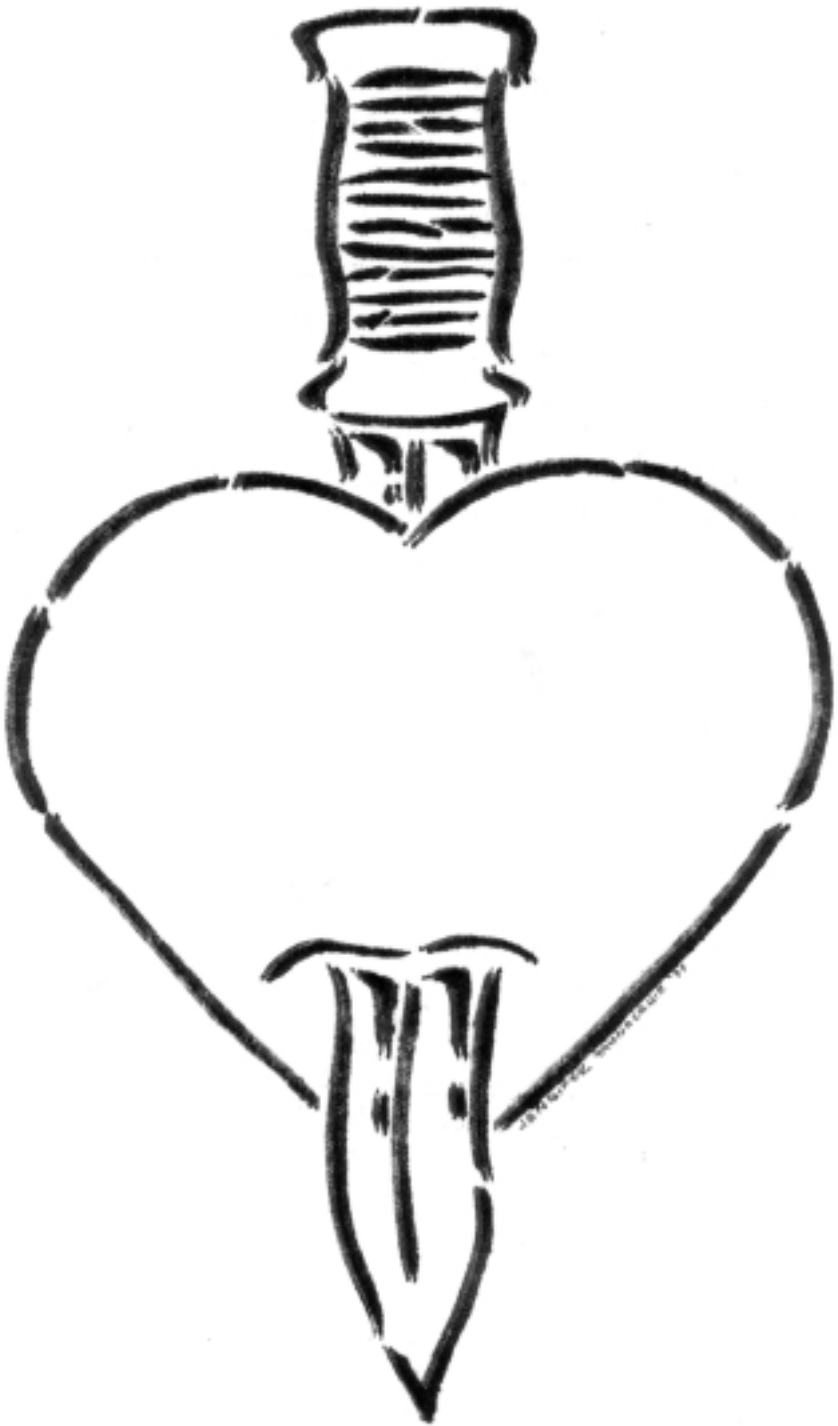
It's not about separating myself from "those people."

My point is not about being strung up on a fence.

My point is nothing, just having fun on the stage.

*Stacey's words made into a poem by Leslie and Stacey 2/02*





*stencil art by jen.*

## Moet

Remember when the world went crazy, with every meal we ate gravy.  
Sippin' Moet with my baby, don't let no fakes faze me.

Remember when the world went crazy, with every meal we ate gravy.  
Sippin' Moet with my baby, don't let no fakes faze me.

The reason I became this way. I had a taste for being a queen for a day, but fuck the bullshit with being on a team. I got all I need, two hands and two feet. Twisted with the gift to speak with a blessed mouthpiece. Two eyes to see when the police are trying to creep, but right now I'm just trying to peep. So I understand the game with this much potential, I know I'm 'bout to get in deep. Never followed a shepherd 'cause i ain't no sheep. Unique, phenomenal, and certified crazy. No man made me, it took a man and a woman to create me. The hopes I dream of are the only things that save me, but it all started when the world went crazy...

Remember when the world went crazy, with every meal we ate gravy.  
Sippin' Moet with my baby, don't let no fakes faze me.

Remember when the world went crazy, with every meal we ate gravy.  
Sippin' Moet with my baby, don't let no fakes faze me.

No man can break bread with me. After all this shit, no man can feed me, teach me, or mentally contain me. Boys in men's clothes, trying to pimp hos. Bro, you don't need a wife at home. If at night baby girl is sleeping alone, with her hand on the phone. Waiting to wake from the tone. While you're running the streets disrespecting. Her mind is stressing and guessing, now you're trippin' because she's coming at you with some real ass questions. Then when she's gone, you're stressed because you're all alone. But how do you think baby girl felt falling asleep waiting for you to come home.

Remember when the world went crazy, with every meal we ate gravy.  
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Remember when the world went crazy, with every meal we ate gravy.  
Sippin' Moet with my baby, don't let no fakes faze me.

Now it's my time. I've always had dreams of the world being mine. Whoever thought, I'd be the one voice. To take it by a rhyme. I do this just to pass time, writing my feelings into words, while I'm smoking herbs. I have to inhale hope to numb the pain of the game, tame the

faceless voices that scream in my brain. The only need I have is just to maintain. Looking both ways to see if it's clear to go on my way. How do you eat if you don't get paid. I sip on Moet and think of nothing 'cause at the end of the day I'm in a daze. But, I will always remember...remember!

Remember when the world went crazy, with every meal we ate gravy.  
Sippin' Moet with my baby, don't let no fakes faze me.

Sippin' Moet with my baby  
Sippin' Moet with my baby  
Sippin' Moet with my baby

Don't let no fakes faze me.

*by Cheris Remines 4/02*

## A Walk At Sunrise

I breathe for  
captivation.  
Cool absorbing a  
sleepy inferno.  
Divinely falling  
angels, or rain,  
clearing the air.  
Tender

Nature feeds on  
the hillside.  
Suna  
paints her sky as  
the moon dips behind  
her canvas,  
no longer shouldering  
the night.

I must be  
hovering, my  
feet send my body  
against my will.  
Do I punish myself  
through ostracization  
from beauty?  
I nearly taste wonder  
upon my lips.

It's ugly to  
be home again.  
Lying among manufactured contentment.  
I crave healing,  
be with me serenity.  
Protect me from  
artificial intelligence.  
Promise always a  
sanctuary from madness and  
we'll greet the morning

*By Dennis McDonald 10/01*

*dedicated to d mac and t mac, i love you so...*

**p.o.w.**

p.o.w.  
includes stops  
at y.o.p.  
gulag.  
get your  
young, sick  
scared ass  
in line  
you're in the  
big time now  
youthful  
offender  
program  
otherwise known as  
kids  
in adult prison.  
don't play with us  
boy  
we got ya  
located up here  
in the  
inaccessible regions  
of our war  
yes, we bring  
our enemy here  
to perform  
our punishments.  
yesterday you were  
fifteen, sixteen  
seventeen years old  
today  
you come of age  
as non-citizen  
non-adult  
non-child  
far from family  
and friend  
we got  
a state issue  
television

and a bottle  
of pills  
with your name on it  
offender  
hate and isolation  
and a limit  
to how many  
books you can  
have in your cell.  
the youngest p.o.w.s  
are sent  
to the most  
violent facility  
in the state  
thirty-two plus stabbings  
in a year  
my son  
carried a  
six-inch shank.  
i pray he never  
had to use it.  
my boys fell  
at seventeen  
and they  
been tryin'  
to get my  
oldest son  
ever since.  
2009  
is a long time  
to wait  
to watch  
my babies  
step through  
our kitchen door  
hungry and  
smiling and  
huggin' on  
their mama.  
a long time

to be under  
siege,  
to feel the  
eyes of hate.  
ten years  
in prison  
for a crime where  
no one was  
physically harmed  
or killed.  
i woke up  
for real  
the day they  
terminated  
my parental rights  
with no discussion  
no hearing  
no notice  
no feeling.  
instead they  
“declined” my  
children into  
adult court  
and i became  
just an  
annoying voice  
on the phone,  
“keep calling  
and we’ll ship  
your sons to  
colorado”  
the man on  
the phone  
told me,  
the so-called  
counselor.  
my friend’s son  
got ninety-nine years  
at sixteen  
ninety-nine years  
for being black.  
my sons are  
white  
and talk about

segregation,  
about walking  
a fine line.  
don’t believe  
the hate  
but gain the  
required acceptance.  
don’t associate  
with the hardcore  
factions  
but don’t alienate  
them either  
because being  
cast out  
from your  
racial group  
means  
terrible danger  
and stress.  
my boys  
walk lines  
fight to be  
allowed to  
read and write  
exercise  
and eat  
they are amazing  
survivors  
their poetry  
haunting and  
healing  
our family  
works hard to  
support  
our boys.  
twenty-two dollars  
per call  
for fifteen minutes  
is too much.  
they separated  
twin brothers  
out of spite  
so i drive  
long hours,

visit two  
prisons now.  
struggle to  
decipher  
two sets of  
rules that  
shift and change  
slippery  
they run  
out the mouths  
of the enlisted  
and drool through  
my fingers  
slick mess  
on the floor.  
they bugged  
our table  
in the  
visiting room  
and investigated  
my relationship  
to my husband  
who was,  
by necessity,  
listed as “aunt”  
on the visitor  
application.  
they recorded  
our conversations  
and busted us  
for being queer  
and trans.  
took our boys  
aside  
and said they had  
“reason to believe”  
my husband  
is not their  
“real aunt”  
and they  
threatened  
and intimidated  
our sons  
and forced

my husband  
to be removed  
from one boy’s  
visiting list  
made us choose,  
because only “real”  
“blood” relatives  
and their  
“legal” spouses  
can appear  
on more than  
one inmate’s  
approved  
visitor list.  
and having a  
queer old  
ex hooker  
for a mother  
is a liability  
in prison  
so i stay  
in the closet  
censor my letters  
we speak in code  
code of honor  
code of loyalty  
code of love.

*l. bull 4/02*

## **forty bucks no condom**

a woman walks down a gray street in the mission district of san francisco. part industrial district, part struggling immigrant business, part slumlorded residential hotel, part ho stroll, part sidewalk drugstore.

*coca, mota, chiva, rocca, coca, mota, chiva, rocca.  
outfits a dollar apiece, outfits a dollar apiece.  
valiums, blues, get'm here.*

*rocca, rocca right here, veinte, veinte rocca*

and the woman's hand reaches out quickly to grasp the small white chunk, pop it in her mouth, just a pinch between cheek and gum, she holds it there until she can get around the corner, reach into her bra and pull out her pipe, a 4-inch length of car antenna with a small ball of copper chore boy stuffed in the end for a screen. she breaks off a piece of the rock and stuffs it in the end of the pipe, flashes her lighter over the top to melt the whiteness onto the screen. finally, with anticipation, she inverts the pipe and holds the lighter to the copper while taking a long deep draw.

*whooooshhhhhh!!! fuckin' a look at all that smoke. whhhooooshhh!!!!  
fuck this feels great. better than cumming. mmmmmmm. shit. who's  
that? 5-O. shit. let me start walking. duck the corner, adrenaline rush  
like you wouldn't believe, gotta walk around, walk around and around.*

the woman is still pretty but getting tore up. skinnier. greenish, bluish, grayish eyes wild. her bottle blond hair, white skin, and curves still combine to mean a quick date any time she steps out on the stroll, although she's come down considerably from her 200\$ a date escort days. ever since she started getting high at work. gets herself into all kinds of fucked up situations she never did before. stuck up in some filthy hotel room, bath in hall, blood spattered on walls. condoms oozing on floor, needles stuck in sink drains. home to cockroach, rat, and despair. cans of ensure stacked in corners. fear.

the woman has been breaking the rules pimps once taught her. never use your real name. only date white, middle class, preferably middle aged tricks. always get the money up front, charge extra for anything and everything, no kissing, always use a condom, try to finish in five minutes or less, and unless it's a regular, steal everything that's not nailed down. she has even been breaking the rules she taught herself. her rules about not getting busted, about not banging dope with tricks, about not being



drugged and photographed, kidnapped, jailed, beaten, raped, or just about dead.

the women's rock is gone and the dull, insistent, empty feeling of wanting more begins to throb deep in her belly, traveling through her cells, fracturing her brain. she aches for more. hungry and tired some in her head begin to clamor for food and rest. they are shut up quickly, firmly, as the ache demands her attention, bends her to its will, forcing her to panicky action.

capp street. short little street just over from mission, the main drag of the district. dressed in tiny, ripped up cutoffs, boobs spilling out of white blouse, the woman walks purposefully atop shiny black spike heels. smears blood red lipstick on her mouth, tries to calm herself. *get more, now*. okay, okay. let's see. she looks around and spots an orange construction truck with a younger white guy behind the wheel. she gives him encouragement, a pouty come on, and he pulls over. she looks inside. he is sandy haired and lanky, folded up behind the wheel, open beer on the seat beside him. looks good but you can never tell. cops'll do anything. lie. dress up in disguises. drink beer. have sex with ya. steal your dope and smash your face into a brick wall. still, it looks pretty good. she jumps in.

*hey, what's up?  
nuttin', what about you? you a cop?  
na, I ain't no cop. you a cop?  
na. can i touch you?  
sure, touch me*

and he opens his pants and the woman touches his penis. doesn't mean much, but might weed out a few cops. she decides it's cool. takes the plunge.

*so what ya lookin' for?  
head.  
okay, head is forty bucks with a condom.  
i got 25 bucks.  
na, its forty. you're really gonna like it baby. i can deep throat.  
forty bucks with no condom.  
na, gotta use a condom. no condom is extra.  
forty bucks with no condom, that's it.*

and the woman sees he might stop the truck and let her out and she will have to deal with another potential cop, another potential asshole more

difficult or dangerous than this one. but on the other hand she could score a straight up trick, a decent john, respectful and safe. shit. what to do. she pauses, fights with herself. get out. no. *get more. now.* fuck.

*you want out baby?*

*na, its cool. forty bucks no condom.*

*by leslie bull 2/02*

## **Bitch**

She's just a bitch  
Want to fuck her?  
You hate her  
The dirty whore  
She deserves what she gets  
Our mothers  
Our sisters  
Our daughters  
They are whores  
Are they bitches?  
Are you afraid?  
See the truth  
You love  
To hate her  
You can't love  
Yourself  
So she's a bitch  
Until you cease  
To be afraid  
She can be  
A whore  
Still love her  
She gave you life  
She's just a bitch?

*Tyler McDonald 2/02*

## **Don't Cry Beautiful**

Don't cry beautiful  
I'm here in your arms  
There's no place  
I'd rather be  
Wrap me  
in your comfort  
your love warms me  
like the womb  
You'll never lose me  
I'm a part of you  
I can't be  
without you  
And I'll always be  
your baby boy  
So hold me tight  
forever  
never say never  
I need you forever  
Please don't cry beautiful  
I'm here in your arms  
There's no place  
I'd rather be

*Tyler McDonald 2/02*

*dedicated to my mother, Carol*

**my mother is a bat and i am a turtle**

my mother is a bat and i am a turtle

cold/warm blooded

my mother hangs upside down

flies at nite

i am round

sunbaked

splashed into water

cold

i become my mother

and she me

we trade places

communicate

my mother's sonar

my round absorption

my mother is furry

with small sharp teeth

my skin is smooth

belly soft

my lover is a vampire

i am a vampire

we know each other  
long ago  
we touched  
then  
my mother's face is tiny  
she looks beautiful  
to other bats  
she is related to moth  
in my worlds  
my mother is a bat and i am a turtle  
we are related to moth  
self-immolation  
high night beauty  
i am a prostitute  
my mother is married  
we are the same  
turtle/bat furry/smooth warm/cold  
we exist  
my mother is a bat and i am a turtle  
we are related

*by leslie bull 2/02*

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