

Synonyms for (OTHER) Bodies

Poems by

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Contents

The Virgin to Gabriel.....xiii

Me

synonyms for (other) bodies.....	17
My Mother's Yellow Dress.....	19
My Grandma Battles the Loch Ness Monster.....	20
bad girl.....	21
the largest scab in my life.....	22
sometimes it's like i'm speaking to an empty room.....	23
When I said my very body was a political act.....	24
i skip work for adult ballet class.....	25
My Grandma Asks Me Why I Pierced My Nose.....	26
Punk Shows with You.....	27
first time in a bikini since 16.....	28
summer prophecy.....	29
Strawberry Picking Season.....	30
maybe i should fill my poems with flowers.....	31
God Doesn't Care about Global Warming.....	32
Red Roses on Valentine's Day.....	33
Our First Fight.....	34
When People Ask Me Where I Grew Up.....	35
Small-Town Famous.....	36
Perfume.....	38
Bettie Page in Our Kitchen.....	39
Chantelle 1745 D 34.....	40

IUD Insertion.....	41
In Celebration of My Uterus.....	42
Learning to Dance.....	43
I am the Voodoo Queen.....	44

We

The World Needs Angry Women.....	47
Washington Tulips.....	48
Skin Cell.....	49
The Sex Talk.....	51
Two Ways to Divide an English Muffin.....	52
Two Ways to Put on Stockings.....	53
at the laundromat.....	54
moon cycle.....	55
what you learn when you only speak when spoken to.....	56
sirens.....	57
New York Love Poem.....	58
Daryl (Race Poem).....	60

They

Advice from Other Women.....	63
Acceptance.....	65
Racing Worms.....	66
Learning to Shoot.....	67
To My Father, Who Says My Body Hasn't Spawned a Political Movement.....	68

Acknowledgement.....	69
Pennsylvania Dress Factory.....	70
Why Winter Reminds Me of Violence.....	71
Why We Threw Peanuts at the Family in Front of Us at the Circus.....	72
Tutu Girl at a Rock Concert.....	74
Table Manners.....	75
Poem for the Skinniest Girl in My Ballet Class.....	76
How to Fall Asleep and Never Wake Up.....	77
Fourth of July, a Week Before His Death.....	78
the air is melting.....	79
Personal Ad.....	80
3 Boys in Front of Me at a Wonder Woman Screening.....	81
to the men who commented on how she squeezed the gas pump.....	82
hands on the 6 train at 4:02 am.....	83
Under the Skin (2013 film).....	84
After the Intrusion.....	85
Juno's Autopsy.....	87
I envy the dead girl.....	88
Bald Mountain.....	89
The K Street Prophet.....	90
Casino.....	91
Photograph of Joan Didion and Her Daughter.....	92
Hawaiian Spring.....	93
I wanted to Google "How to Kill Yourself".....	94

i talk to my therapist in dreams.....	95
i had a sex dream.....	96
The Weave on 3 rd Avenue.....	97
Watching Ancient Aliens.....	98
Giselle's Anxieties.....	99
Our Cat Is a Feminist.....	100
My mother thinks I should go to law school.....	101
Shopping for a Washing Machine.....	102
The News Will Be Our Unmaking.....	103
Why You Need to Teach in Other States.....	104
Watching You Write before Work.....	105
Feet Poem.....	106
Nude Beach.....	107
Sun King.....	109
Sunburn.....	110
the fire.....	111
The Witch.....	112
her illness is.....	113

synonyms for (other) bodies

i am fat & i am invisible
i go out to eat in groups
& the waitress always
seems to forget my food
it takes me two rounds
to get a beer & after four
we go because everybody
is looking at me because
nobody is looking at me
because i already paid i hit
up the gym in all black
a big black marble i am
invisible big muscled men
lift weights next to me
& i am in their space
their space i move back
with every lunge & i
am in their space & i
move back with every
bicep curl & i am in their
space they hug my space
with their piney sweat
until i have nowhere else
to go but out on my way
out somebody says girls
of my stature will never
outrun their problems i
run fast until i'm origami
& bones i fold in i fold
in i can use my wrists
as scissors i cut my hair
to expose the elegance
of my cheeks i leave
my hair on the floors
of coffee shops & they
still forget my coffee

& i still pay so now
i only drink water
& scrape the glass
with my thinning teeth
& still i am invisible
i accentuate those
striations under my
ribcage i carve out
the meat & feed my
loved ones & still i am
invisible i raise my hand
to ask a question & i am
invisible i interrupt & i am
rude one day i spoke into
silence until my tongue
lit on fire when i paused
for water somebody else
stood up to pawn off my
story & the audience went
wild

first time in a bikini since 16

& baby i still got it
my partner asks me not to speak
while he lathers me with sunscreen
can't concentrate on 2 things
at the same time

my skin outshines
the rhinestones on my sunglasses
my bones are a classic car too precious
to drive 'til some rich chick's daddy
buys me for her birthday

the woman behind me is having a baby
a photographer holds a camera
to her smile
the nylon of her skirted navy one-piece
stretches so far i could hear it

her husband steps in seagull shit
trying not to touch me
she follows me to the restroom
slams the toilet seat down in the next stall
to threaten me

we wash our hands together
the best & worst thing about beach
bathrooms is the lack of mirrors
& the long walk back
through hot heavy sand

on my way i think of
the last time i wore this bikini
i was 16 & a virgin
i was so small it fell
right off me.

IUD Insertion

& here I am

sundress folded back at the hips
panties scrunched to ankles
knees knocking together
along with the radio
shaky hands wound up & icy
with the biting shame
of a catholic school spanking
or a period in khaki pants
or virginity
or an std

& here he is

scent of anesthetic & coffee
gloved hands
rubber smoother & thicker
than the blood in my womb
ready to hollow me out & insert
a boomerang on a string
he calls our indiscretions
doin' the wild thang
opens me up like a painting
& I scream

& there you are

making yourself small in the corner
white knight to my wasted ovaries
paler & sicker than my tissue
paper blanket
a face miraculously empty
of questions
you slide me from the table
as soon as he lets you
& ask the nurse for a napkin
to wipe my thighs

The Witch

Her eyes make little boys give up their ice cream.
Salons pay good money to cut her hair.
A flash of her earlobe gets criminals talking faster than the FBI.
Her mouth makes the weather more interesting than politics.
Imagining the hollow of her throat is illegal in 7 states.
Her voice invented the opera.
Several constellations are named after her shoulders.
Her breasts started a war. Twice.
Her lungs are conch shells
and her breath is why it's so expensive to pitch an umbrella at the beach.
Her heart makes schoolgirls question their sexuality.
Her heart is an entrance sign.
In some circles even thinking about her heart is considered cheating.
GPS systems go kaput when her hands dispute their directions.
Her arms are worth more than all the wedding rings in the world.
Her stomach keeps men in the kitchen.
Her ovaries are hot enough to fry an egg on.
Her ass is the logic behind yoga pants.
Her hips are jungle gyms that are never too high to jump from.
Her thighs inspired the two-way street.
Her toes started underground fetish clubs.
Grown men build treehouses to peer into the mystery of her closet.
Her name is androgynous.
By the time you speak it aloud you're already damned.