

MOUTH

TO

KNOW

MESSIST

ERATION



They were small holes, access points to your inside from the out, and to the outside from your in. Your skin was a surface that held you together in a shape that had limbs, which you used the way other bodies with the same shape showed you. Secretions from your pores, called sebum, had a smell you recognized as the smell of sleep. You returned to your pillowcase each night, adding another layer from your body to it. The textile was a second surface that caught what your skin let out from inside you. After a while, you began to share characteristics with this pillowcase: its smell, its buttery touch.

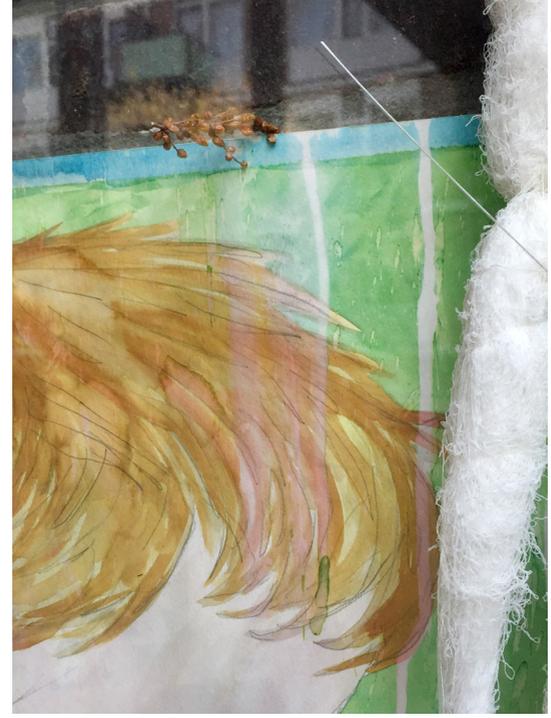
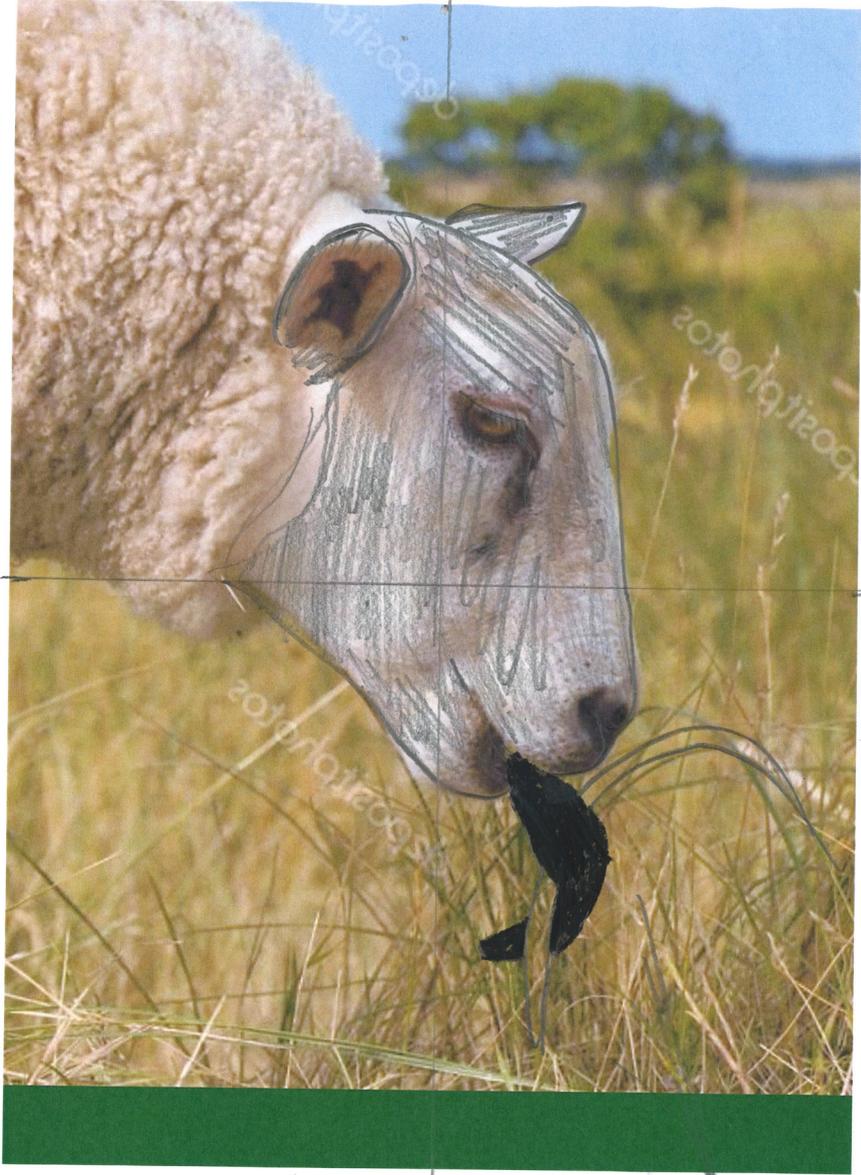
When you became frustrated, impatient, and angry, you grew red in the face: it seemed like your entire body began ejecting liquid. Salty sweat covered your body, your hair clung to your scalp. At these moments, she said you reeked of wet wool - of lanolin, a sheep's waxy sebum. In this fit, you smell created a field around you, of farm animals, of big grasses and grazing black tongues, of mass haircuts and boiling body hair, of survival by wearing the excretions of another being's skin. Did you know that if the hair came from a sick body, it could not be used? You cried and shrieked and kicked, as if violently mourning this unacknowledged body sharing.

When you met them, and you laid together with them, your pillowcase earned a new layered residue. Their follicles shed short curly hairs that entangled with the weave of the fabric, and fused to it with the grip of your sebum. Your two bodies left residues in all of the spaces you shared. And your pores opened - this time not only to the dirt and the dust around you, but also to their sweat, tears, spit, and theirs to yours. You began to wake to the smell of each other seeping from your pores, you began to grow each others hairs from your skins. You borrowed their shirts and they borrowed your pants, and you squeezed in and filled out to fit each others containers.

You saw, as you laid tangled together under a Mulberry tree, a worm slowly close a leaf around itself with the strength of its tacky excretions. For hours, it spun yellow around itself inside the curled green. The leaf was a green palm that closed gently on the hard cocoon. You thought together: unravelled and rewoven, worm discarded, that yellow crust could be our pillowcases. You began to sweat from your brow, and you sniffed early signs of sweaters in the rain. You thought of things in life rather than life in things, and of the constant flux of material bodies, and of your lives together having once been apart, and of the contact perpetually made by different skins, pores, and excretions. At that moment, at the precipice of your fit, new blades of grass microscopically aimed for your exposed pores while your sweat fed them salted afternoon dew.

The continuity that was no continuity carried on, so you accepted whatever.



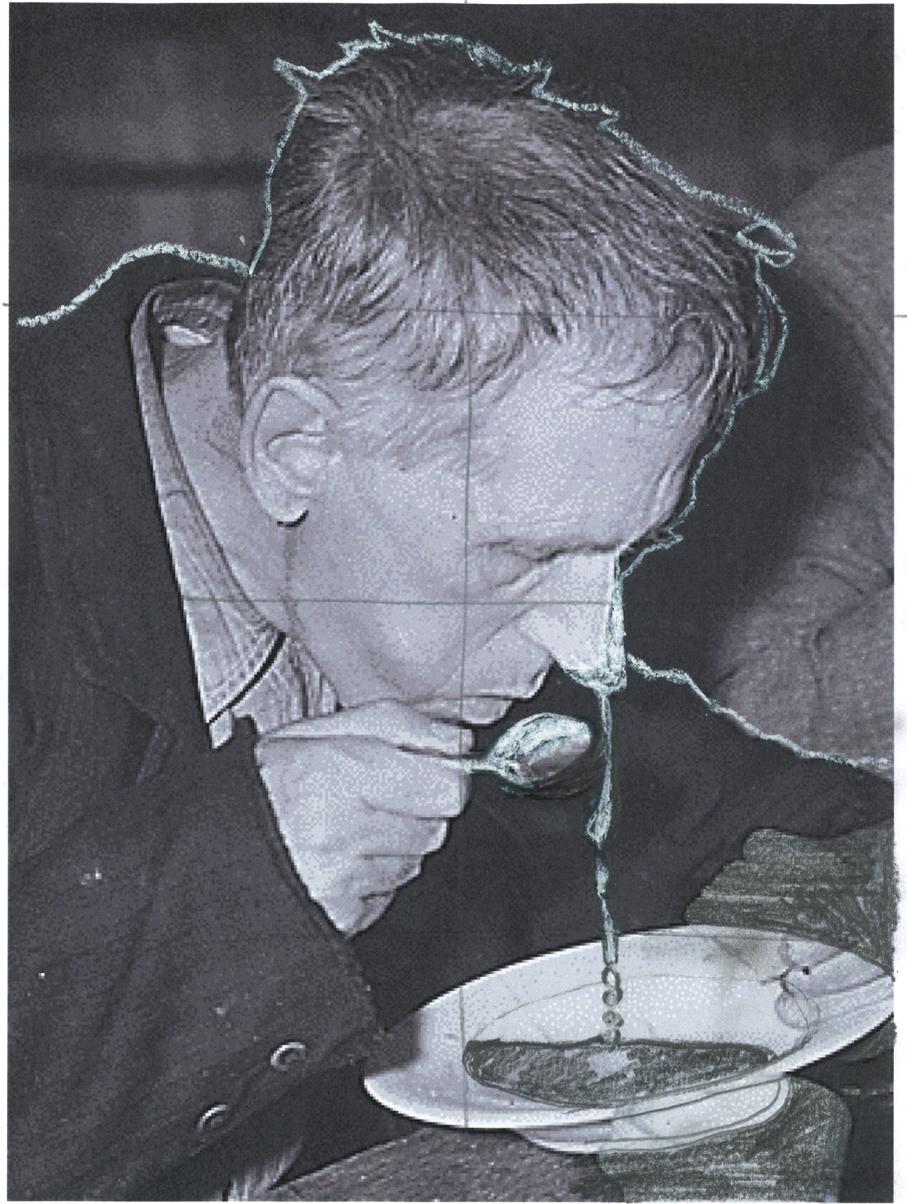


Some celebrities that bite their nails:

Kate Middleton
Britney Spears
Robbie Williams
Uma Thurman
Lindsay Lohan
Kelly Rowland
Reese Witherspoon
Sofia Vergara
Olivia Munn
Jackie Onassis
Phil Collins
Eva Mendez
Lisa Marie Presley
Casey Affleck
James McAvoy
Jonathan Rhys Meyers
Gordon Brown
Andy Roddick

My mom once caught me biting my toenails, when I was far too old for the habit. I was inflexible when I was young, everywhere but my hips. I could put both my feet behind my head - and can still now if I'm practicing yoga regularly. On the subway in Chicago, there is a lot of spitting - sunflower seed shells onto the floor, brown spit from dip into plastic bottles, loogies hacked and ejected through the doors open at the next stop, spit onto a rag to wipe crust from an infant's cheek, crescents of nails down there with the seeds too. Little crescent slices of body.

Mothers bite the fast growing nails of their infants so they aren't able to scratch themselves. Baby nails are very sharp. I wonder if my mother spit out my crescents, or sometimes kneaded them down between her teeth as I sometimes do to my own, to smaller and smaller pieces, until swallowable. I wonder if they could be so sharp they cut her mouth, or throat. I wonder if she chewed on my nails as I chewed her nipples in the early days, wondering if I'd ever manage to swallow a drop. Cycling all the way through ourselves with little pieces of each other.



Canadians love to claim celebrities from their country. Celebs are identical in Hollywood, but some had a secret - they grew up in Ontario/Quebec/British Columbia/ wow NOVA SCOTIA?! Justin Bieber, Pamela Anderson, Ryan Gosling, Ellen Page, Keanu Reeves, Mike Myers, Seth Rogan, Willam Shatner, Dwayne Johnson, Alanis Morissette, the Sutherlands, Michael Cera (*saw him in Toronto once - holy shit! What neighbourhood?*), Rachel McAdams, Jim Carrey, Drake (*no duh*), Avril Lavigne, Celine Dion (*that one's boring*), Dan Aykroyd. *They're just like us.*

If they laid them all out on the table, they would manage to conjure up some mirage of continuities - in character, disposition, personal life. "Of course he's Canadian," we'd say. "It makes sense, weirdly!" A choir of two-cent comments that would deflate without the hot air of collective delusion.

After ten years, I've semi-mastered the Canadian celebrity game. Now that I've moved out of the country, I need a new list to sing together with new strangers. Maybe there's another lowest common denominator that eases the otherwise excruciating process of getting to know someone, or allowing another to get to know you.

This process makes me anxious, my hands tell me so.

Britney Spears is a nail biter,
you know.

That doesn't surprise me *at all*.

Yeah but I feel bad saying that -
it makes me think of the shaved
head era. But Kate Middleton too.

What really?

Yeah. She's a princess right?

Why do you know this?

Uma Thurman as well.

Let's look more up.

Who's Gordon Brown?

I only care about the women, I don't know why.

Do you think you could survive a
couple days on your own nails? If
you grew them out in preparation
for a couple days in the woods or something?

Resuscitation
Resissiation
Remussination
Memuscitation
Memisteration
Messisteration
Messisteration
Sister Station
Sister Nation
Menicisation
Mesissedation
Messisleration
Meslaceration
Laceration
Messaserlation
Masturbation
Messterbation
Sister nation
Resisterration
Remesseration
Renumeration
Remuneration
Remuncitation
Recitation
Resuseration
Resisedation
Sedation