

Kate

The change.

Each year around this time,
My body starts to change.

My knuckles slowly, but surely,
start to split apart,
revealing strawberry spider webs
running digit to digit.

The skin on cheeks,
becomes raised pink-orange ringed scales.

Zits pepper my shoulders and back,
thousands of unblinking eyes
silently staring out.

The hair on my arms becomes
darker and thicker,
black wire that crawls higher and higher,
edging closer and closer to my heart each year.

There is an intermission
in my neurotic nail-biting,
the nails turning hard and long,
tangled talons.

As the skin on my legs start to molt,
turning dry and dusty,
I feel the compulsion
to scratch and slice
and saw off the dead cells cocooning my legs.

Digging deep,
and deeper,
and deeper still,
restless until blood dots my legs
like birds' footprints on freshly fallen snow.

My whole body pulsing, convulsing,
putrefying, petrifying, purifying.

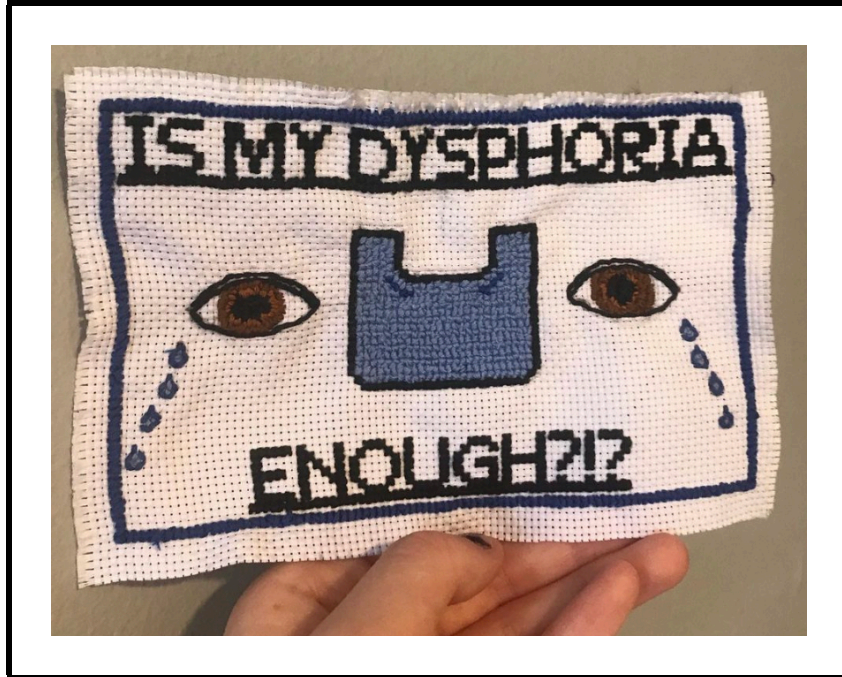
On the brink of breaking,
On the brink of a new beginning.

And each year, I bring my body back.
And each year, I lie to my body,
with medicated ointments and lotions,
with sweet perfumes and moisturizers,
that is year will be different,
that the world will be softer and kinder
to my body,
that I will find peace in the mirror's reflection.

Soothing the creaks and groans of my stir-crazy
bones,
with a gentle and practiced touch,
to its secret nooks and corners.
I quiet its worries that this year will leave it
smaller, sadder and more twisted than it was before.

But I am tired,
I am tired of lying to my body,
I am tired of fighting my body.

This year I will stop fighting my body
and will see what my flesh becomes.



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Untitled