

## THE MANY-GENDERED MOTHERS OF MY HEART<sup>1</sup>

*The defendant is a man. A full grown, six-foot, wide-shouldered man in a dress.*<sup>2</sup> *The defendant is not a woman, but a male pervert roleplaying as such for his own twisted sexual amusement.*<sup>3</sup>

You're not who you know yourself to be.<sup>4</sup> The often rough and uneven texture of the skin<sup>5</sup> more lurid and grotesque than it needs to be.<sup>6</sup>

No one can agree on what "femme" is.<sup>7</sup> A disciple?<sup>8</sup> An opportunity to be honored?<sup>9</sup> An accusation from which I have to exonerate myself?<sup>10</sup>

They have to assess if you are a boy or a girl.<sup>11</sup> The skin on your face,<sup>12</sup> the development of breasts:<sup>13</sup> *It's time to put this tranny on trial.*<sup>14</sup> An invitation for other people to doubt who we are.<sup>15</sup> Honestly, I would be surprised if most people don't feel some sort of doubt.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dana Ward, *A Kentucky of Mothers*, PEN AMERICA (Jan. 22, 2014), <https://pen.org/a-kentucky-of-mothers/>; see also Maggie Nelson, *THE ARGONAUTS* (Graywolf 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Natalie Wynn, *Autogynephilia | ContraPoints*, YOUTUBE (Feb. 1, 2018), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6czRFLs5JQo>.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Jackson Bird, *Am I Really Trans?*, YOUTUBE (May 29, 2019), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-teBenVDyOU>.

<sup>5</sup> The Pretty Fix, *How to Cover a 5 o'Clock Shadow Completely (On Any Skin Tone) | MtF Trans Tutorial*, YOUTUBE (June 30, 2019), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOgRZBqVW3c>.

<sup>6</sup> Wynn, *supra* n.2.

<sup>7</sup> Tuck Woodstock, *Gender 103*, 1 GENDER REVEAL 15 (Apr. 16, 2018),

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/gender-reveal/id1330522019?i=1000409005885>.

<sup>8</sup> Wynn, *supra* n.2.

<sup>9</sup> Woodstock, *supra* n.7.

<sup>10</sup> Wynn, *supra* n.2.

<sup>11</sup> Jackson Bird, *Sh\*t Trans People Deal with Every Day with Riley J. Dennis*, YOUTUBE (July 20, 2017), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNzk9zri1Kw>

<sup>12</sup> Riley J. Dennis, *How hormones (HRT) change a trans woman's body | Riley J. Dennis*, YOUTUBE (June 17, 2018), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCCnv9dWM0A>.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> Wynn, *supra* n.2.

<sup>15</sup> Bird, *supra* n.4.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

Is this science?<sup>17</sup> Little proto-lesbian things,<sup>18</sup> covered in stickers for you to vandalize,<sup>19</sup> are now putting you in the spotlight.<sup>20</sup> It might be worth it to stay in the closet.<sup>21</sup> I thought if I identified as trans it'd mean the end of my life.<sup>22</sup> I didn't have someone to tell me that there was hope.<sup>23</sup>

It's seen as creepy. If someone who's read as male is looking for bras or panties or whatever, that has a very, like, creepy, gross connotation to it.<sup>24</sup> The rounding out and softening of your features<sup>25</sup> more than likely means you have to admit something to yourself and then to others.<sup>26</sup> You try to be a safer space.<sup>27</sup> Make them explain why they did this and make them fix it, because people are already dying.<sup>28</sup>

*Your honor, the defendant does not bleed.*<sup>29</sup>

This is the trans experience. It does not go away.<sup>30</sup> Roughhousing and violent self-expression,<sup>31</sup> it's just not safe.<sup>32</sup> You can see where it marks you.<sup>33</sup> *But wanting something isn't the same as being something, right?*<sup>34</sup> Like you're a little child.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Wynn, *supra* n.2.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> Woodstock, *supra* n.7.

<sup>20</sup> Dara Hoffman-Fox, *How Do I Know If I'm Transgender?*, YOUTUBE (Apr. 25, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oea10Q5tG4Q>.

<sup>21</sup> Riley J. Dennis, *So, you think you might be trans?* | Riley J. Dennis, YOUTUBE (Sept. 24, 2017), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgNoPjy0170>.

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*

<sup>24</sup> Bird, *supra* n.11.

<sup>25</sup> Dennis, *supra* n.12

<sup>26</sup> Hoffman-Fox, *supra* n.20.

<sup>27</sup> Woodstock, *supra* n.7.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> Wynn, *supra* n.2.

<sup>30</sup> u/cloudrac3r, response to *egg\_irl*, REDDIT, [https://www.reddit.com/r/egg\\_irl/comments/gogv6b/egg\\_irl/frgx63t/?context=3](https://www.reddit.com/r/egg_irl/comments/gogv6b/egg_irl/frgx63t/?context=3) (last visited June 18, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Cassie LaBelle, *Gender Dysphoria Isn't What You Think...*, MEDIUM (Apr. 19, 2020), <https://medium.com/gender-from-the-trenches/gender-dysphoria-isnt-what-you-think-6fdc7ae3ac85>.

<sup>32</sup> Bird, *supra* n.11.

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> LaBelle, *supra* n.31.

<sup>35</sup> Bird, *supra* n.11.

At the gala,<sup>36</sup> wearing a full face of foundation,<sup>37</sup> 5 o'clock shadow completely undetectable,<sup>38</sup> I stood on stage and said,<sup>39</sup> *Is there a way to smash my ribs in?*<sup>40</sup> For the scrutiny of people who despise me<sup>41</sup> kept telling me that I was angry—and I was—but I didn't FEEL angry. I just felt anxious all the time.<sup>42</sup> *Now, let's talk about your bones.*<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Dennis, *supra* n.12.

<sup>37</sup> Pretty Fix, *supra* n.5

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*

<sup>39</sup> Dennis, *supra* n.12

<sup>40</sup> Wynn, *supra* n.2.

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> LaBelle, *supra* n.31.

<sup>43</sup> Dennis, *supra* n.12.