

## BIRKE GORM

Within this frame i will nail her tight; Her hands, fingers, arms, nails, hair, head, feet, thighs, abdomen, buttocks, navel, chest, nipples, throat, mouth, cheeks, teeth, lips, chin, eyes, forehead, eyebrows, shoulder blades, armpit, muscles, bones, marrow, sex, leg, income, profit, health.

*Crack.* It just happened. Without a warning the flacon had dropped from her locker. She nearly caught it twice on the fall down, but when the glass hit the vinyl floor it smashed to pieces and the liquid spread into a puddle on the floor. For a second it petrified her, until humiliation kicked in. The fragrance instantly penetrated the air of the corridor, and spread to the offices attached to the sides, and the leisure room and kitchen down the hall.

Her colleagues instantly wheeled over and stuck their heads through the doorways.

*Are you ok?* Nod.

She ran to get paper towels, and when she came back they had gathered around the spot as if this small accident was a car crash. She wiped up the liquid and put the shards into the container, which they were part of until just a few minutes ago. Wrapped it up and threw it in the garbage.

*Was it expensive?* It was a gift.

*Was it still very full?* Yes.

They'd assumed that the loss of those costly drops was the disaster, when actually it was the exposure of the incident that occupied her afterwards. She had deliberately worn a subtle fragrance; one that was hardly noticeable - one that would not even reveal itself as perfume - as long as she kept the dosage low enough. She would emit a hint of over-

grown garden inside this neubau where the interior was of coated chipboard, stainless steel and so much glass. She had chosen ivy, when she had learned that *Ivy's scent cannot be extracted. It must therefore be invented, given green notes; its leaves must be crenelated with fragrant accords, the roots of its trail must be extended...*

A reconstruction was so much more appealing to her than anything supposedly authentic. It excited her that she could provoke a sense of nostalgia or longing towards something natural in these sterile surroundings, through something made from fabricated components.

Also: The ivy is a climber. She could identify.

*It's a beautiful plant that's been around for years, but there's a lot of rules that you should follow when you grow ivy. Ivy is a gorgeous plant in the garden, it's so beautiful - cascading from planters, or along a walkway, or in a rock garden, or on a rock wall. They're just a beautiful plant. But what a lot of people don't realise; that a lot of the ivies, especially a larger ivy than this - this is a smaller ivy - the larger ivies, are pretty much taking over a lot of the forests, and what happens, if I were to plant this ivy in my garden, right into the ground, it would be ok because I'd probably take care of it, and make sure that it wouldn't grow up the*

trees, and make sure that it wouldn't take over the yard. But that's because I'm taking care of my yard sometimes. If I were to leave it in my garden and move, and then someone moved in that didn't really take care of their yard very well, what would happen, this ivy would take over my whole entire yard, it would come up that tree, it would climb up this tree, and it would eventually kill everything in my yard and there would be nothing but ivy left. Ivy is a beautiful plant, but use it with care. Nobody wants to have ivy grow up the fence and eat out the fence and have nothing left of the fence and then you have the issue of just ivy everywhere. And it does, it grows, it kills trees, it kills all the plants it comes across. So, it's a beautiful plant, but you've gotta make sure, if you do introduce it to your garden, that you're gonna be very careful that it doesn't get into any natural areas, or go into the trees or worse yet: Do not let it near your house! Because it will actually climb up the walls and eat into the walls, and I had a neighbour, that it went through the wall and it was all the way inside her living room and she didn't do anything about it because she'd thought it was a pretty plant. But eventually it did eat the wall, and we had to put a new wall in. So, it is a beautiful plant, and I know the hazards of growing ivy and there's beautiful ways to grow it, it grows great from a fence if you can keep it contained, it's great to use if you're a florist or from bouquets hanging out of the bouquets, but it really is a plant that needs to be cared for. So, they're easy to transplant and easy to plant: They're just a set of roots. And so, they really don't even need dirt, they will grow in the air. They're a plant that grows off of other things, so they'll actually grow onto a tree and just eat the tree away. But they're just, all you need is a tiny root, and once you have a tiny root, it will grow and grow and grow. It's a beautiful plant, but like other beautiful plants, it can become invasive. So, just use a little bit of caution, keep it in a full sunny spot, keep it in containers, don't put it near the house. Ivy is a beautiful plant, and you should use it in your garden, because it is so beautiful and it is so traditional and it makes hanging baskets or it makes containers just so elegant, with a little bit coming out of it. But use it with care, as you should with many other garden plants, because it can become invasive.

The illusion was gone; her charade was over. She wouldn't be able to ever wear that - or any other - perfume again, after it had been poured out like that. Her persona was jammed with manoeuvres like these; A flawless but effortless appearance - her hair, skin and nails were neat, but not *made*. Her clothing - classic, discreet colours and simple cuts; essentials. Modern and clean, but not distinctly dogmatic. Her smile was polite and her attitude cooperative, but she kept an unobtrusive and offish manner - there was never anything conspicuous about her up until that moment. The perfume was a final layer to her meticulously forged framework; a coating allowing her to keep contained. Within an instant her mind game had been revealed and deflated.

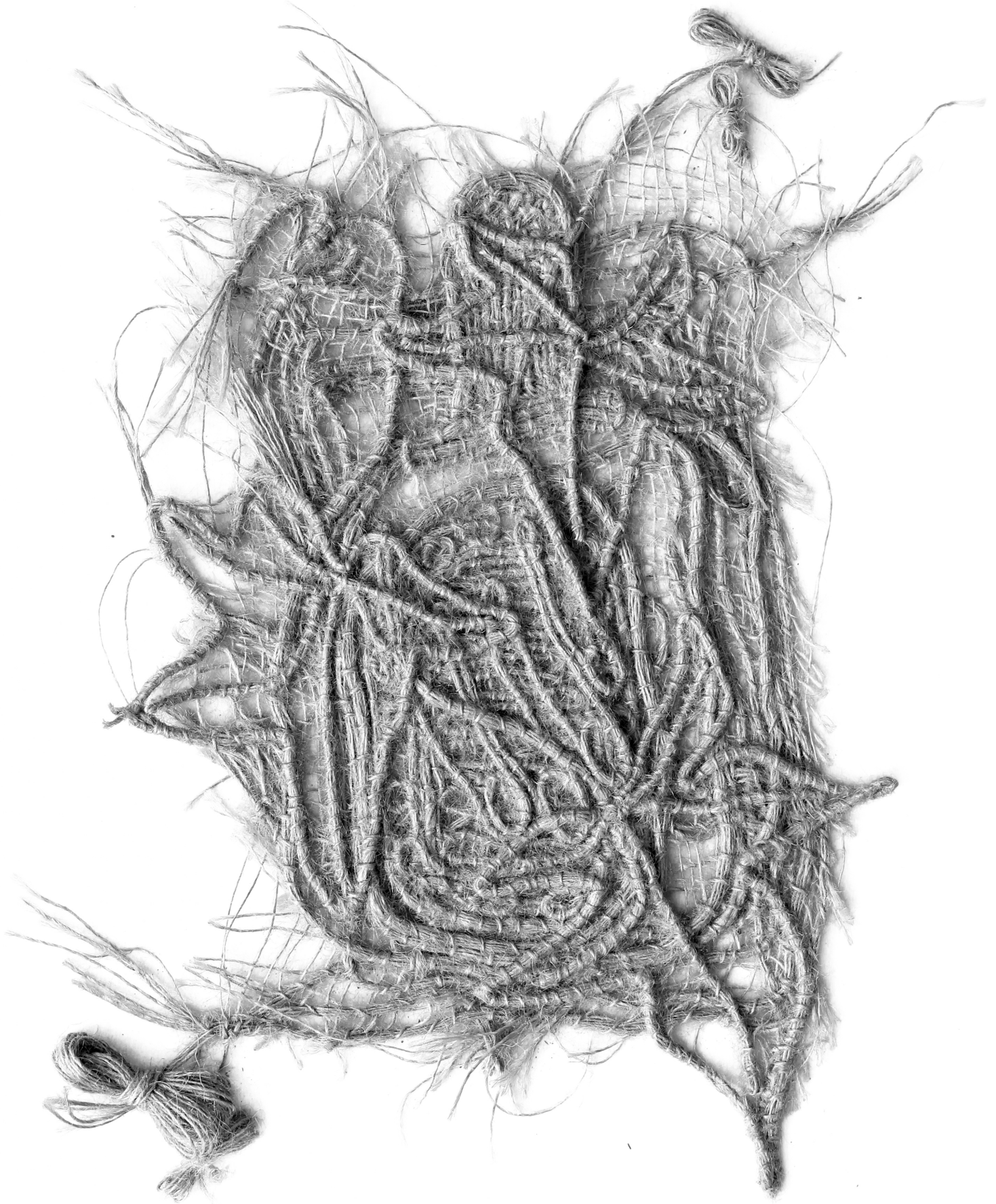


*Fuck. Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck. How did that happen. Why the fuck does this kinda shit always happen to me. I must be born with a natural affinity for getting 'physically' hurt. How on earth is it even possible that it broke after such a low drop. And even after slowing down the speed with my attempts to catch it. Wait, did I even hold it in my hand before it fell?*

She began replaying those split seconds over and over. It was difficult at first, because her memory was clinging hard to the point of no return: The instant when the glass cracked, was when she woke up. She had been dozing around in her daily routines and had not paid attention. She began analysing. Could it be that all of this was not rooted in physical awkwardness; that there might have been another trigger. At first it seemed far-fetched, but since she wasn't capable - after endless attempts - to replay and construct her own actions sufficiently, it became clear:

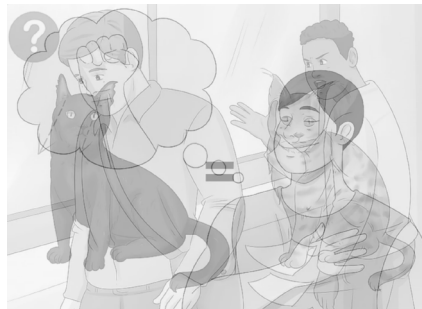
It was a setup.





Recently, she'd read an awful short story about a possessed deodorant, which had commanded from the top of a bathroom cabinet: *Pay homage to me mortal, your idol was flesh! Unworthy, bow to the incarnate idol, with your face in the dust, or I lay your heart in your feet! Worm, sacrifice to your idol, or I shall crush your bones to dust!* The affected and startled young man had immediately offered his possessions and devotion to this imposing little object, while fumbling through naïve attempts of ritualistic behaviour. Frantic and ham-fisted.

It turned out to be a nothing but a teenage prank. Regrettably, this wasn't. In her case nobody had been around to fool her. It wouldn't be possible to tell anyone the likely truth of what might have happened, they would assume she'd become superstitious or had begun to lose her mind. *Things don't move. Objects don't do. Do they?* The flacon might have been headstrong enough to ambush her, but it still couldn't resist the earth's pull. Either the attack had not been completed, or it was planned exactly like this: A sacrifice, which was simultaneously the strongest weapon it could possibly draw. The burst of the bottle had created the rupture that led to her leakage. She would carry out the rest automatically; like an avalanche that had been set off.



During another daily routine, her clothes would begin to flee from her body. The seams would start to unravel themselves in an almost animated way; rewinding as if they had somewhere to urgently return to. First the sleeves came off, sliding down her stiffened arms like solid tubes, collapsing as they hit the ground. Then the rest of her jacket; the shell, lining, pockets, collar, lapels and buttons. Her pencil skirt. Her white poplin shirt. All in pieces and in a forlorn pile around her feet. As her underwear came undone, the pressure from the elastic straps caused them to snap and propel through the air in multiple directions. Striking those passing by, causing further attention and embarrassment. Next: She started imagining the following episodes.

*You are to be attacked:  
Fever, frost, deathlike pallor, streams of sweat, fever chills.  
In the morning, in the day, evening and at night.  
Defy: Of this hour, this day, this night.  
Rub, grind, crush - now, now, fast, fast!*

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