

Red Leather Couch Reformation

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I was only 13 when the world started
conditioning me for submission,
because I fell asleep on the couch as I was;
a girl,
blessed with the naivety so many other girls
had ripped from them when they, too, were still just girls.
But I rose anew;
A woman swaddled in a child's body.

Because I awoke with stained pants and
a pain in my gut that would not ease;
Not with time.
Not with painkillers.
Not within the arms of my protectors.
No relief would be found in the biting pain of wood grain
on my knees, knelt in a beggar's prayer.
It would stay unsettled.

Because I was worried about how to seamlessly
slide a tampon up my sleeve in class.
And they were worried about pinning me down
and injecting me with vaccines to preserve my bounty;
my usability.
My Flintstones were now to be taken with
a pill to keep me protected, until the time was right.
I started to understand my place.

My body was no longer mine; it was no longer a body at all.
No longer the chassis of my soul that carried me up trees,
or shielded me from scraped knees
when I ran faster than boys down dirt roads.
No longer the storyboard of my life spelled across my skin,
in freckles and scars.
No longer a girl with dreams and gap-toothed smiles.

Instead, I became a moldable vessel—
an unsullied womb.