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## UNTIL

I step on the weighing scale in the bathroom,  
the metal cool against my feet,  
and wait for it to spit out  
today's number:

78

I imagine the scale, my friend, saying  
I promised I wouldn't overeat,  
that I broke its trust.

*Guess who won't be eating today!*

The scale jokes.

I smile weakly.

Just a few more pounds to lose  
until I can fit into those trendy XS jeans,  
until I can flaunt my delicate waist,  
until no one can criticize my eating habits anymore,  
for I'll be eating nothing.

I run my hands under water so scalding that it feels like  
needles are quickstepping on them.

I want to yank my hands away.

I imagine my blistered hands saying,

*You deserve this. You made these scars.*

So I slather soap on my face and

scrub,

scrub,

scrub,

until my face turns red and my hands become numb,  
until I can't differentiate between my acne and skin,  
until I become unrecognizable.

I wear clothes that cover me

when I leave my house.

With a mask covering my face

and baggy clothes disguising my body shape  
I feel safe.

Today, it's blazing outside.

A perfect day to wear shorts and a T-shirt, right?

It's also a perfect day to get picked on.

*That jacket really highlights the dandruff in your hair.*

*Do all girls have tarantula legs?*

The insults pierce my mind like bullets,

wounding every last shred of hope I

once felt when I was comfortable in my clothes.

No matter how much I hate what I'm turning into,

I want to be accepted. So I walk out the door,

knowing that I'll have to do this every day

until people forget that the

the girl who lives in the house

is the same as

the girl who leaves.