

Existential

Dysphoria

Felt by

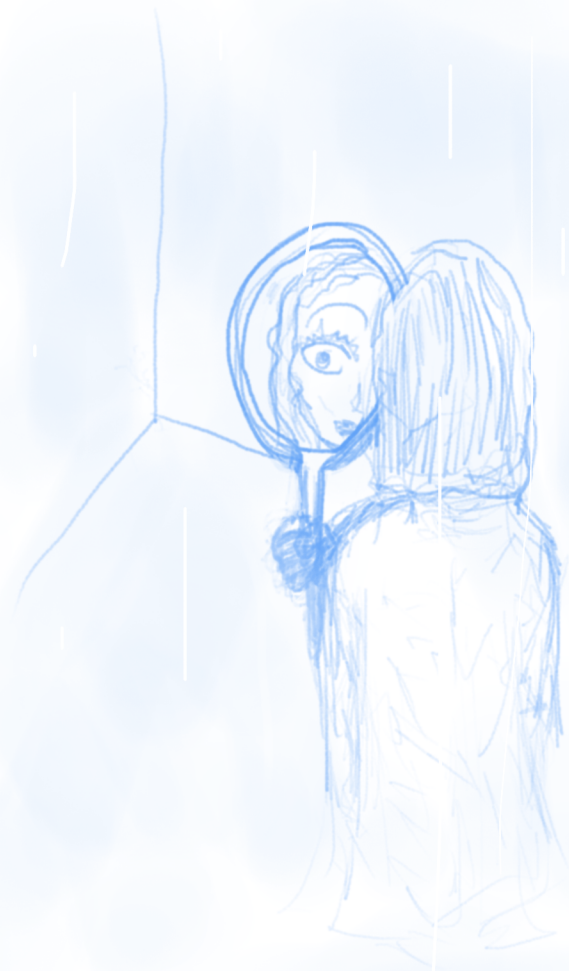
Marie Exarchou

Looking

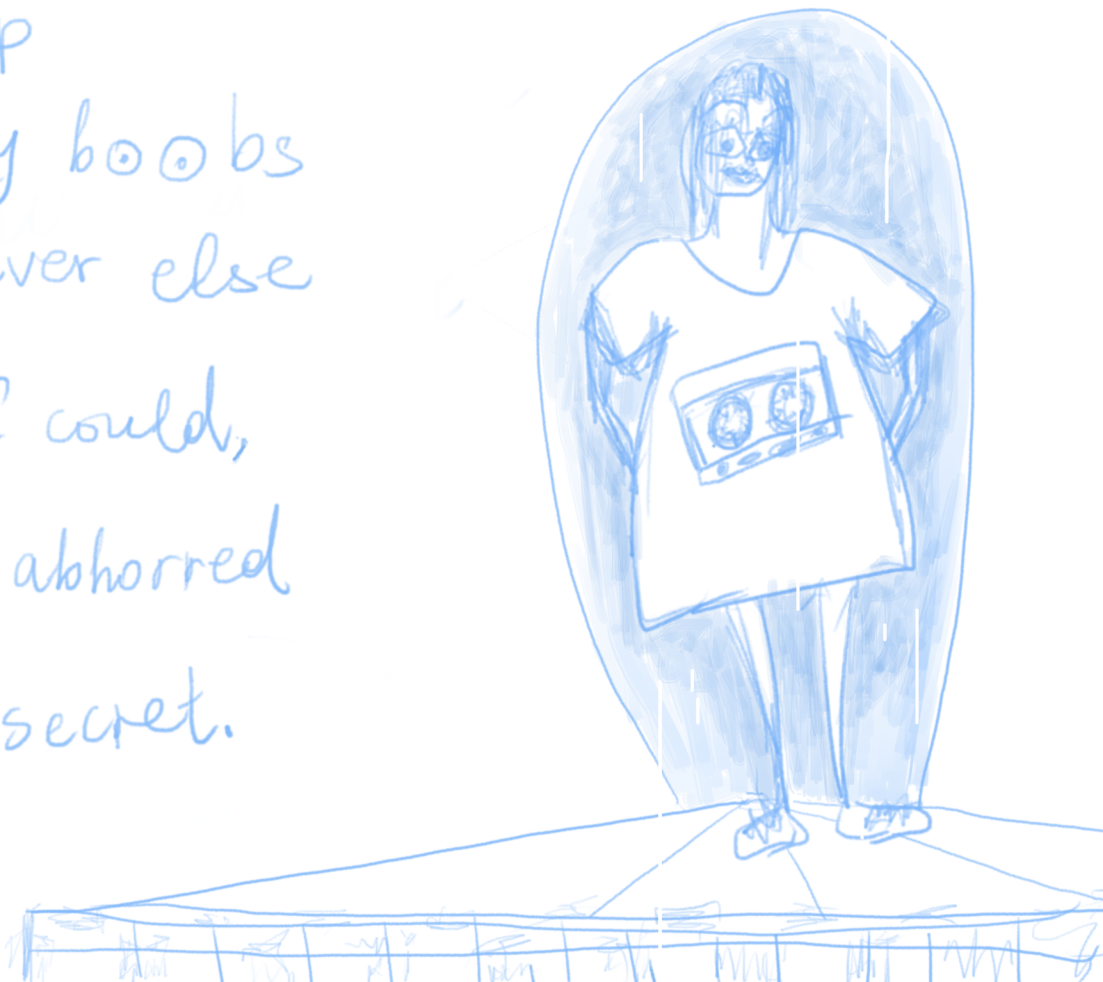
in the mirror

was never

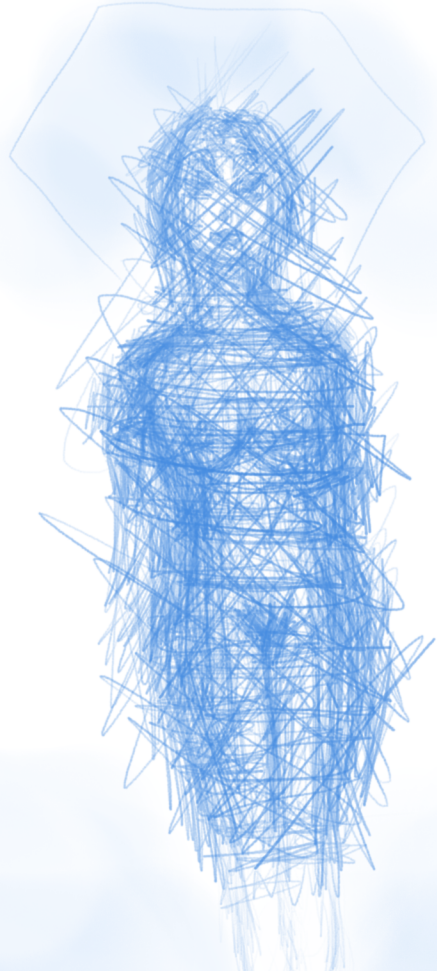
EASY.



Growing up  
I hid my boobs  
and whatever else  
of me I could,  
like an abhorred  
family secret.



I hated what  
patriarchal constructs  
urged me to  
view and treat  
as a tool:  
my own female  
body.





I am a

**PERSON!**

I shouted through  
radical actions  
of self-neglect  
and self-harm.



Eventually,  
things came down  
to either getting  
crushed by or  
rising above  
what others  
made of me.

hypersensitive

hyperactive

too young

too wild

too old

too sexy

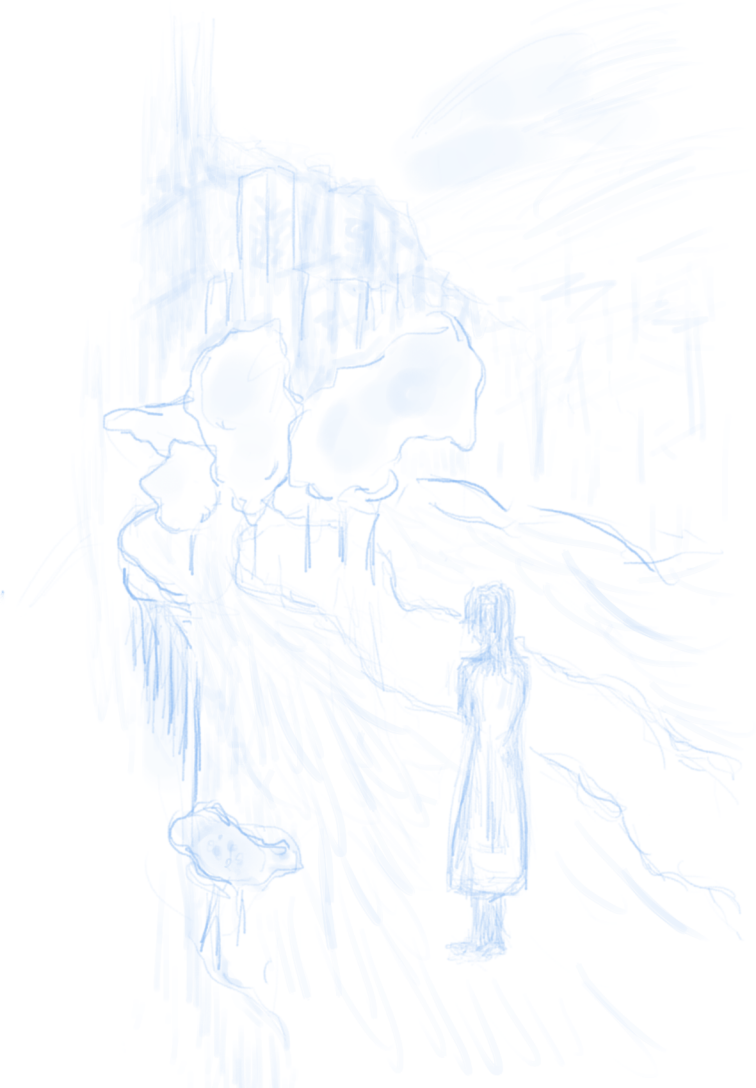
not sexy  
enough

tombay

overthinker



Conforming was  
for the comfortable ones  
but I was  
carrying a  
heavy shame  
that wasn't even  
mine, but  
bestowed upon me.



I had to break  
so many walls  
to escape the  
tyranny of words.  
and with words  
again I had  
to build the <sup>open</sup> space  
where I could belong.



and  
where there's enough  
room to celebrate  
the little wins  
but even more to  
embrace  
the great  
losses.

