

# Me, Museum

Mary Lambert

My mother found a rabid dog  
And wanted to hug it  
Wanted to give it all her glorious honeylove  
Wanted to bathe her children in a two-parent household  
But, the dog didn't want kids  
The dog would scream it in the hallway at four A.M  
Reminding us as often as possible  
The sheer art of it  
How the monster could panic into my body  
Sometimes I still hear it in the chambers of my heart  
The way some glorious paintings stay with you

I am a museum  
I must be a museum

When I was seven, the dog told me I was going to be a slut  
No one came over to our house to play  
The dog made me write, "I will flush the bathroom toilet" seventy-five times  
I would've remembered to flush the toilet  
But, I started blacking out around then  
Forgetting basic things  
Started praying that Oprah would save us all  
I took snapshots with my memory camera  
Hoping there would be justice for this kind of psycho warfare  
The teachers at the daycare offered apology eyes and extra sequins  
For the art project  
The day after, the dog chased me around each room  
Because I forgot where my other shoe was

When you are a child  
And your mind is panicked like a fire alarm at all times  
You lose the ability to remember simple things  
I haven't lost a personal item in months  
Do not laugh when I say, 'This is a victory'  
Shame is an ocean I swim across  
Sometimes, I call it drowning  
Sometimes, I call it Moses  
Sometimes, I say, "Good morning!" and sway to its murky durge  
Sometimes, I win and cut off its crest with a pink machete  
Sometimes, I want to fuck it and  
Marry it and kill it all at the same time  
Sometimes, I spend my whole day apologizing on shame's behalf  
Sometimes, I think it must be an art form to feel this bad  
Sometimes, I outrun all of its psycho history  
Other times, I repeat the language from my childmouth  
While beating my head against a wall  
But all the time I am forgiven