

Now I'm like look do yourself a favor
and don't start googling menopause
there is nothing good that will come of it

Google says

People also ask

What happens during menopause

How long does menopause last

Can a woman have an orgasm (sic) after menopause

There is one British site that lists

the "34 Symptoms of Menopause" in a jaunty font

Most of them I've heard before but "burning mouth syndrome?"

UK meds dot com can fuck right off

Do you know there's a word for pain during sex

It's called *dyspareunia*

(You can see the despair in it)

One time this woman started telling me
about her own despair and let me tell you
there were details I was not ready to hear

I guess what I want to say is that this body
has served me faithfully
this body
has had its day
has been handled attentively and well
in some of the finest
hotels
motels
and private homes
up and down the eastern seaboard
and in most major cities of the western coast
in a handful of ravines
beneath some trees
in the backseats of some cars
on a hiking trail or two
on several different types of public transportation
has been gazed on in love
and admiration

has sometimes been reviled
and on occasion handled roughly
what I mean to say is that it's had a good
run

[but what will I be without this body sexualized?]
[last night I fell asleep watching porn]
[reading erotic stories in bed – so badly written]
[why is sex writing so bad – I'll read it anyway]
[can I even write about the body]
[write about desire with constraints]
[don't make the joke about restraints – you can see it coming a mile away]
[don't make the joke about coming]
[that's what she said]
[that's what she said]

The morning I turn forty I wake with pain in my lower back and aches in my knee and hip but at night we go dancing and I throw myself around all thrust and curve and heat as if recklessness is proof there is still life in me yet when we get home the kid's asleep but the babysitter's sweeping broken glass she's *sorry sorry* and offers to pay but you tell her *it's fine really it's fine* and when she leaves we go at it right there on the floor like we did when we were young you brush the glass shards from my hair and from my dress

*

I go to meetings and sit at tables and write things down sometimes I interject or ask a question or suggest *we follow-up by email* maybe there is a tray of muffins and maybe I take one and pick at it or wrap it in a napkin for later I make a slide deck or a spreadsheet or I comment on some googledocs watch my lunch rotate on the microwave carousel watch the timer count the seconds down wait for it wait for it Sometimes I have a meeting offsite so I can eat the tasteless muffin as I drive

*

There's some party out in Newport so my friend and I dress up she drives us to the mansion where we can drink and eat for free the sound our strappy sandals make as we strut across the marble floors is a little like a mating call among the bored middle-aged corporate set it sounds like hooking up in the coat room or against the wall in the butler's pantry isn't there always a fucking butler's pantry Men offer us drinks and sometimes we take them but mostly we laugh at their jokes with our pink mouths open

*

Can't help myself I am always thinking about death so even when that one handsome one so young the one I imaging getting up on and *riding till the wheels fall off* as my friend is fond of saying when he asks me about my work I tell him how little time there is left more days behind me now than there are ahead I'm at the crest of the roller coaster and I can see that it ends and I know how fast how fucking fast it will all be and I am hot and flushed and maybe I think beautiful but he is backing away

*

which is of course for the best I tell my friend on the ride home and she laughs We've let our hair fall loose and taken off our shoes her breasts are full and round and spilling from her low-cut dress she is forty-nine which is older than me and when I tell her how much I want how much I ache how I can't sleep for all this wanting she laughs *oh sweetie* and says *it's just your body's last gasps before menopause* she says don't worry it won't be too much longer now don't worry she says all of that will be behind you soon