

**she is a small, thin girl**

*by ashley inguanta*

she is a small, thin girl  
a skin-and-bone girl  
her friends say how thin she is  
some say she is sick thin  
some say she is lucky thin  
thin enough to fit into american apparel  
thin enough to be a go-go dancer  
thin enough to be happy  
but do they know she used to weigh thirty pounds less?  
do they know she used to go to bed every night, wishing  
she could know what "full" feels like?  
do they know she used to shake  
from the eighty-degree weather?  
do they know she could feel her hair thinning  
falling all over the bathroom floor  
all over the bedroom floor  
strands of hair in the car  
on her chair in history class  
do they know she used to wish  
someone would ask how she was  
inside  
rather than saying, *you are so so thin*  
*your leg is the size of my arm*  
examining her like she was made  
of anything but skin, bone, organs  
do they know  
she would wake  
every morning  
and realize  
she had to do it all  
again?  
do they know eventually she had enough  
so she forced herself to eat  
(every day for months, she would force herself  
and it felt like lifting weights, training for a marathon)  
and every day she forced herself to eat  
so maybe, just maybe someone would see  
the inside  
the maggots and mold, rotting life inside  
the yearning, the absence, the thirst for love inside  
instead of her outer frame, skin, bone  
so much bone  
and every day she forced herself to eat  
and with every pound gained  
she felt like a storm, a monsoon, furious and heavy  
even though she was still thin  
american apparel thin, as her friends now would say  
go-go dancer thin  
lucky thin happy thin  
but inside  
she is a riptide, an avalanche  
reaching for intimacy  
falling furiously  
doing it all alone  
just as every pound gained  
was on her own  
and her insides  
will heal  
from the touch of her own  
strong hands