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Agony

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AGONY

Johanna Stephens

She lies awake nights, rocking back and forth and straining to stop the constant low whine emanating from her throat.

Sleep tortures her with promising dreams of flight, transformation, truth, only to wake up covered in fingernail marks – huge swollen purple welts with crescent shaped pools at the centers. Self-mutilation is hers – a glorious routine to forget all but the white-hot passion of agony.

In pressing her nails deep, deep, and pulling off the chocolate scabs, she is blissfully unaware of her acid disenchantment in reality.

She wants to believe, she wants to believe in anything, but the obsidian void kills her. Doubts become black adders that crawl under her skin and slither through her veins. They burst free only through blood let out in fluid violence.

Trying to believe slaughters her, makes her whimper to an unseen god that has yet to answer. She only really believes in nights – bright ruby with her blood and white-hot with the absence of memory.