

"In cooperation with the RAINN Speakers Bureau, we wanted to share with you an opportunity to share your story. RAINN was recently contacted by Lexie Bean, who is currently working on a project called Attention: People With Body Parts. In an effort to create solidarity and raise awareness, she is looking for survivors who have been told or forced to believe that their bodies are not safe spaces to participate in a multimedia project. From now until August 8, 2013, she will be accepting letters survivors have written to one of their body parts to publish in a book about reclamation. If you would like to participate, click [here](http://www.attnpeoplewithbodyparts.org) for more details and guidelines for submissions. Names of contributors will remain anonymous in the published version of the project.

Lexie Bean, Founder and Creative Director, Attention: People with Body Parts.  
[www.attnpeoplewithbodyparts.org](http://www.attnpeoplewithbodyparts.org)."

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**RAINN Project: "Attention! People with Bodies" Submission**

**June 16, 2013**

**¥ Submission Number Two ¥**

**by Gregg Tyler Milligan**

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*"Hey! I said . . . Hey?" My mouth spoke to my brain in no more than a raspy whisper. "You are giving away too many secrets."*

But it was too late, my ears heard the words loud and clear, and that meant the strange man did too. In the night, with the slice of silver light coming through the dirty living room window, his cold and wet mouth wrapped itself around my privates just before he promised it wouldn't hurt. But his mouth lied and so did his floating glazed-over eyes. And when his throat started to gurgle and make that sucking sound, my stomach lurched, rolled, and then my own throat opened up and what little food was in my stomach from the past two-days came up and splashed all over his screaming red and bald head.

*"Is this dirty?"* my dry mouth whispered because there was no more air left in my lungs.

The man did not answer. His dry sandpaper lips and cold spit-filled mouth just kept sucking. Not only were his lips prickly, but they were big as if swollen, stiff like the lump in his pants that his right-hand rubbed sometimes, and quick. Too quick. His whole head moved back and forth in these jerking motions, and every time the man snapped his head forward, his bristly hairy chin punched my small and undersized testicles. My brain was trying to figure out what was worse – the bad things the man was doing to my private parts or the pain. I think my brain finally gave up and said to me that both were the same. A "tie" we called it when we raced in the schoolyard. My legs never knew what a "tie" felt like because I was too small, hungry, and slow.

My heart told me what the man was doing is dirty and told my brain not to tell anyone. Not the man for sure, but not anyone – ever. My heart wanted to make sure, so it said to my brain, *"You promise?"*

And my brain answered the same it always did in that tired, 'I give up, you win,' kind of way.

*"I promise."*

Then my brain told every other part of me – head to toe, it was dirty, and to keep it to myself. My heart jumped in like it always did and said to the brain, *"Hey, you are tricking us!"*

But the brain said that some of the money Mother got would be for food and suddenly had my tummy on its side. Still, my mouth 'sometimes' never listened to my brain. Mother said that all that time. So, my mouth asked the man again ... *"Is this dirty?"*

Too bad for me that both his ears did not work, because he did not seem to hear me. My small and ten-year-old penis hated this feeling and told the man's mouth by staying asleep. Even if my brain and heart did not agree with one another, my penis did not care. It knew that when every now and then it would get a little bigger, the stranger's lungs would fill with air and it was always hot against my belly. The strangers would try harder and stay longer. So, my penis stayed asleep but this was not difficult. My brain, heart, and penis liked working together when it came to the strangers.

The man was pushing his puffy face against my tummy and then his whole mouth opened up really wide and he swallowed all of my privates. Faster and faster his head rocked back and forth.

My brain said, *"He is not slow and careful like the older neighbor girl who sometimes babysat us."* But my heart didn't care because that too felt just as dirty and one time my eyes closed really tight but the tears squeezed through anyway. The older neighbor girl did not even look up to see, but the tears fell

on her open breasts that embarrassed me to look at. My eyes opened long enough to see her hand pressing one of her bare 'titties' as my brother called them, and her other hand was down her panties in the front. My brain and eyes knew what was down there. It was her privates and her hand did not seem to care if it was pressing too hard and maybe hurting her. I did not care either because she did not care about the tears my eyes sent her, with a secret message from my brain and heart that she should stop and go home.

The man's throat made a grunting noise like a pig. Like a pig that was mad at the other pigs.

My little arms were so heavy all of a sudden, and I had to tell my brain to tell my arms to lift up and at the same time 'cause I needed both of them to do what seemed to my brain like a good idea – tell my hands, now really numb, to push the man's forehead backward. But his forehead was slippery and sweating even though it was winter and the electricity was shut off in the house, making it cold all the time.

The man's breath was panting like a thirsty dog and my ears warned my brain you better tell our hands to hurry because the man was trying to hurry too. My penis tried to stay asleep, but sometimes it would wake up but my brain told it to go back to sleep again. My back hurt because it was stiff and ached from standing too long and trying not to fall down. My brain warned me many times that I did not want to lay down. That would be dangerous. More dangerous.

The bad feeling in my heart helped my penis stay sleepy. The man's eyes went from looking happy to angry. Again, my brain told my heavy arms to tell my hands to push a heap harder against the man's sweaty forehead. But his own brain, body, arms, and hands must have been telling him to try harder and to hurry. Because that is what he did.

Suddenly, my throat got really small and I was choking. My eyes watched what little vomit was on the top of the man's head and the floor, but the man did not care. He did not even get sick like my brother did when I puked in front of him. When I did that, my brother's stomach gave up what little food it had inside it too.

My eyes could not find anything to stare at in the room, and so they started to close while my head seemed to grow really big and too heavy for my thin neck to hold up. And, the fading light got darker all around me.

My mouth said, *"I want to go to bed,"* to the man, but his ears were still not working. His hands worked pretty good because his left-hand grabbed my naked bum and was as big as one of my cheeks. The

man's other hand told his thumb and his 'pointy finger' to hold my penis and squeeze it. His hand also told those two fingers to pull and then push really hard past the man's ugly teeth that were yellow from smoking like Mother's. But her teeth were not real.

My brain, my body, my penis, everything – hurt really bad. Not the kind of hurt my heart felt, but that kind of hurt was there too. Mostly, it was like when my legs ran until they could not run anymore but had to keep running so they were shaky.

It was when my brain remembered my heart again that I started to pray. I did not use my mouth, but the one I kept on the inside that lived in my head and first prayed to the moon. While the man's stubbly face decided it was time to scratch my belly and inside of my legs. My brain said the man's face was doing this the whole time but forgot to tell me.

I prayed to the birds I could barely hear outside because it was nighttime and they were going to sleep. Not sleepy like my penis to be safe – but in the good way. Because their bellies told their mouths that told their beaks that told their throats to eat the bugs and worms that filled their bellies, and now the bird's bellies told their brains it was time to sleep. My brain and heart both agreed that it was good to be a bird. Especially now. Any kind of bird – a crow, goose, an eagle to carry me away or an owl to sing me a lullaby.

The man's hands, fingers, arms, and body finally gave out. Even his knees which cracked, with a popping noise that came from one of them as he shifted his weight and struggled to stand. His eyes squished shut when one of his knees cracked and he bent over again very fast. He then stood up straight. My own eyes stared at the floor. My brain was too afraid to tell my arms to tell my hands that they should pull up my large hand-me-down dirty underwear. The man's throat grunted again and he wobbled on short and fat legs that carried him out the battered front door.

It wasn't until the door shut behind him that my neck turned and forced my eyes to look into the cracked mirror over a cardboard bookshelf. The mirror played a trick on my eyes because it was broken, and my brain saw two faces. Both faces were reflected in the mirror – only one was good enough to see, and only if I closed my right or left eye. My brain could not remember which eye I needed to close for a better look at the mirror. But then for some reason my brain told the eye that could not see as well to close and I saw my face. It was white like a ghost and puffy from crying. The one eye staring back at me was round like a Frisbee and red. My penis ached and it felt like there was wet poison all over it eating through the skin.

The man's work was done but he would be back tomorrow and my brain and heart told me this. But they did not need to – because I could see Mother's crooked mouth in my mind making sure I remembered the man would be back. Just then, Mother yelled from her bedroom for me to get in bed.

My body would not listen, and it took Mother's angry crooked mouth a second time to make my body move. It did slowly and I crept past the opening of Mother's door as quietly as I could even though my brain knew she was awake. My eyes and ears did too.

It was dark but my eyes said they could find my doorway, so they told my hands to reach for the old molding to the bedroom I shared with my brother. Once they found it, I stumbled to the bed on my feeble legs and lay next to my brother's warm body. My ears listened to him breathe and this made my body very tired, my head heavy, and my heart lonely.

Before falling asleep, my brain told me to shut my eyes. But my heart told me it wanted to be a bird before I woke up the next day.

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