

doll hospital

ISSUE 4



'SHE DEVIL': ON THE DEMONIZATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE SURVIVORS

Sexual violence survivorhood is satanic worship and psychosis is magic demon power so either way I am going to Hell. No! I am not going to Hell. What a silly thing to say. I am Hell. You are going to me. When you die I'll carry you inside me. I will cradle you in my belly like the wooden crotch of a big oak tree in an Enid Blyton book where the little dormice live with their straw bonnets and scarves eating apple pie and talking magic.

I am not an Evil person, I am Evil itself. I am not Eve, I am the Apple. I am not Sméagol, turned monstrous in his addiction, I am the one Ring that made the poor fellow that way. The Instigator not the Embodier. She Devil. It is much worse to be the whisper in the ear making the poor person do the bad thing than the innocent oaf that gets sucked along for the ride. Those piddly paedophiles with their magazine columns and their Hollywood movies are the victims I am not. Calling him a rapist really hurt his feelings and don't you know a court case will look bad on his CV? I am a bully. I am petty. I am increasingly realising that my function in life is to comfort the happy childhood-ed fangirls when their favourite rapist celebrity dies.

The survivor is the bad thing. The original evil. The one that made him like this.

The She Devil on his shoulder.

It is all my fault.

The satanic survivor is amongst the living dead. Reanimator. A zombie in a pink cardigan who can write uncomfortable think pieces and might click maybe on your birthday party but won't actually ever turn up. She hasn't eaten one bit of breakfast but has reserved seats in the quiet carriage of the train station so that is something. The Satanic Survivor is a big success! She is wearing shoes and under eye concealer!

Being a survivor does not feel like surviving it feels like a living death. 'I AM AWAKE IN THE PLACE WHERE WOMEN DIE' shouts Jenny Holzer. But I do not wish to be awake, to be imbedded in this death space. My body is both war crime and war memorial. Surviving should equate to success, to escape, so why am I like this?

I am fascinated by Female Evil. The two-faced witch, whose crone-y crime is the aged ugliness she hides from the men who want to fuck her, her secret smelly face that shows only when alone and naked in bed. Snow White, The Shining, Game of Thrones, memes of girls with and without make up, a movie monster with as many incarnations as Michael Myers. Take her swimming on the first date, see if she has her devil face beneath the skin. Ugliness is evil, it is a betrayal. Beauty is evil too of course, though explanations differ on the what and why. Some say it makes people crazy, turns family men into neighbourhood child molesters. The child rape victim is not a child she is a Beautiful Nymphet, outside of innocence and outside of accountability.

The She Devil on the sex offender's shoulder strikes again.

It is all my fault, again.

And it is becoming increasingly clear that the female serial killer, the female evil, She Devil incarnate, is less Hannibal Lecter and more a countless list of working class women who have been sexually abused across infancy and adolescence, spit out from society and shut out from sympathy, only to be obviously and inevitably swallowed into abusive relationship of extraordinary damage.

These are women (some fictitious, Mallory Knox some altogether real, Aileen Wuornos) who are serial killer sex abuse survivors.

When I am told I am Evil for experiencing the worst things warm blooded murder is perhaps an outcome that would be convenient to ignore. The violence not of turning into your abuser but of becoming so scared that everyone is your abuser that you will punch out at anyone who presses too deep. When the crimes of our abusers are welcomed with a smile, whilst we are pushed out of heaven for being nasty little holes, it is understandable we want to rebrand ourselves as Saints and not She Devils. Those this and that outlines which press against the hipbones of overtly unwell women until they eventually draw blood. The hyper vigilance of post-traumatic stress disorder is a saucepan to smash the skulls of those around us.

Always on. Always Evil. Always tired. That curious mix of cruelty and creepiness that embodies the enduring fascination with childhood sexual abuse. The time lapse of the body. The endless rape. *I Spit on Your Grave* is a movie made in 1978 that has been playing on loop ever since its consummation. You think it's about to end but it never does. They all keep coming back. The infinite gang rape swells across time, stretches over breakfast, lunch and dinner, before being clipped like a pigeon's wing into a YouTube masturbatory montages and rewarded with a remake. This trauma never ends!

But they want that sweet, sweet She Devil, they need her. They need me. (Or me if I was not so greasy and so ugly and so ethnic). There's a reason Harley Quinn is the Halloween costume of choice and not the Joker. They need the She Devil, to beat and to fuck, and on very special occasion even to be. Whether in a dress up show costume or a coveted movie role. A very special mask to pass around the dinner table.

I am a necessary evil, a warning, a dress up box, a ghost story. A She Devil.