

Ashley Howard

BODY-PICKING AND BAD POSTURE

I could have been so beautiful
but I'm not.

Instead I hunch on and over bathroom counters,
listening to avoid getting caught
under clinical LED slabs,
lightbulbs in knots,
or just any that provide a clear view of my skin.

Not smooth like porcelain
or pristine like fair-maidens.
Instead I madden over every bump, rise,
discoloration.

In a trance
without a trace
of what's to be done,
and waiting on my to-do list bar
none
I dig, scratch, rupture, all I see fit.

Where I could have stood like
the enchanting greek statute.
I slouched and
slagged any assets that
could've properly grown into their size.

Instead I am the envious medusa.

Grotesque and experiment-esque as an unfinished sketch
with face, arms, legs and breast
wrought with pencil strokes
curved as nail imprints.

Splayed vulnerable
on crumpled sand-toned paper,

regretful I never straightened myself out.