

i'm so fucking beautiful



#1

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i am fat. i say this not because i have low self-esteem, but because i have high self-esteem. i love myself, & i want to be able to accept myself and every part of me. it has only been within the past two months or so that i have really begun to think about this issue, and how i, as a fat grrrl, am affected by it. this zine is about me and my thoughts regarding sizeism and fat oppression.

i want to point out that sizeism does not deal only with fat people. i understand that many thin girls are given shit by other girls for being too "perfect," and very thin people are often accused of having eating disorders when really they just have small frames. these are aspects of sizeism. but usually i would associate sizeism with fat and the fear and oppression of fat people. most women, and many men as well, are obsessed with the fear of fat. they spend ridiculous amounts of time worrying about getting fat, being fat, looking fat, being thought of as fat, etc. i do not exclude myself from this group, but i am working very, very hard to overcome this. it makes me so mad--i am an intelligent, talented person, there are so many cool things about me, and still i spend almost every moment of every day thinking about my body and my fat. it is always there in the back of my mind, nagging at me: "i'm fat. that person is



making fun of me because i'm fat. that boy doesn't like me because i'm fat." it's really disgusting, and i realize that i shouldn't spend so much time thinking about it, but this society has made it impossible for me not to. at this point, i can consciously say that i do not care that i am fat and i am glad of it. i can consciously say that i do not want to lose weight. i can consciously say that people who disagree are fucked and i don't need them anyway. but subconsciously i can't get rid of it. every time i look in the paper, turn on the t.v., read a magazine, watch a movie, i am confronted with blatant sizeism, i am told that i am shit and that i should disappear. (euphemistically referred to as "losing weight.")

i am not satisfied with most literature i have read about fat oppression. *fat is a feminist issue* says that women are fat because of psychological problems, and although it does not advocate dieting, it does advocate weight loss, subscribing to the general opinion that fat is bad. most literature tries to get behind the "reasons" for fat and the "problems" that cause it. and even the very small amount of literature that is pro-fat focuses more on the oppression of fat people in our society than it does on pride. *shadow on a tightrope: writings by women on fat oppression* is a really



amazing and powerful book, but after a while it gets really depressing to hear everybody's sad stories of oppression and dehumanization. (don't let this stop you from reading it though--it's really important and has a lot of good information in it.) the fanzine "adventures of big girl" is the only thing i've read that i thought was totally right-on. i want people to realize that being fat is not a "malady"--it is normal and natural and fucking cool. (i named my zine "i'm so fucking beautiful" because that's what i want to hear, and it may as well start somewhere.)

for those of you who find the word "fat" to be abrasive and offensive: i used to think so too, but i now prefer it to all of the "nicer" terms. all my life, i would cringe when i heard the word fat. it was the one word that could really hurt me, more than anything else. then i read *shadow on a tightrope*. at first, i felt a jar in my stomach every time i read the word "fat"--that is my conditioned response to the word, since it has always been used as an insult. it was almost painful to read that word so many times per page. eventually i got used to it. then i realized how much power it has. "fat" is not necessarily a bad word--it describes a physical attribute, just like "tall," "blonde," etc... on the other hand, the word "overweight" implies that there is some set weight that is ok, and



anything beyond that is too much. the medical term "obese" actually comes from the latin word for "overfed." (fat and overfed are not at all the same--i'm not going to get into the science of all this, but there is substantial proof that fat is a result of genetics and body type, not overeating. many "obese" people are forced to exist on only 800 calories a day, but still gain weight. compulsive eating is a result of excessive dieting, not of some "weakness" that fat people are afflicted with. i suggest you read the aforementioned book for more information on this, as i am not an expert in this area.) i have learned that if i can get rid of all the stupid connotations behind the word "fat," it can be very empowering. fat is not bad. fat is not ugly. fat is just fat. if i know that, then nobody can hurt me with their stupidity.

for seventeen years, i have been hating my body. yes, my body is not like my friends', but neither is my mind, and i have no complaints about that. even when i weighed only 130 pounds, i thought i was "too fat." i have dieted a lot, which, reflecting back, makes me really mad. my first diet started when i was five. it was self-inflicted. my parents thought it was cute. (they were both on diets themselves at the time.) that was the



beginning of my body-hating.

i have never been *allowed* to love my body. when i weighed 130, my friends weighed 105 and complained that they were fat. when people finally started realizing that they should stop hating their bodies, they said "i guess i'm not that fat. i could be worse. i look ok." with i interpreted as "i look ok, but you are too fat. you are beyond the boundary of ok-ness." in many ways, articles that preach body-love hurt me worse than articles that say "lose weight or else." with the latter, i can look at it and go "this is shit. fuck you." and disregard it all together. but with the body-loving articles, i am tricked into believing that it is going to tell me that i am ok, but end up hearing "if you have a big butt, just accept it. you're not fat, just curvy." but what if you *are* fat? why am i never told to just accept it? these articles play with my mind, because on one hand, they say "it's cool to accept your body," but on the other hand, they say "but not if you're fat." and so i am left with the choice of loosing weight so that i can accept my flaws, or being uncool and left out. **FUCK THAT.**

i am not going to wait anymore for other people to tell me that i'm ok. now i am telling them. and if they don't agree, they can go fuck themselves, because it's no longer their decision to make.

i will not hate my body any longer. if i am hating my body, i'm hating myself. my body is not some separate entity, it is me.



Y R U all SO INTENT ON KILLING me?  
WHAT IF I DON'T WANNA DISAPPEAR?  
Y IS THAT THE AIM OF YR SOCIETY?  
I REFUSE, I WILL NOT LET MYSELF  
BE DRIVEN BY YR FEAR.

U TAUGHT ME I'D B BEAUTIFUL  
IF IT WEREN'T 4 HOW I LOOK  
U TAUGHT ME I MUST ♡ YR GOD  
LIVE MY LIFE BY YR FULKING HOLY BOOK  
& I MUST COMPLY W/ YR LIES.

DON'T PUT YR ARM AROUND ME, PLEASE  
U THINK THAT I AM BLIND  
I KNOW I KNOW I KNOW  
WHAT YR KIND  
ARE TRAINED 2 see...





## clothes

the other day, i tried to go shopping at this cool store in port townsend. nothing in the entire store fit me. this is not an unusual experience--i am shocked if there is ever anything that does fit--but this time i got really pissed off. why should i have to take it for granted that i will find no clothes that i like that fit me? when i go shopping, i have to look first for sizes that will fit me, then for styles that i like. it's just a given that no "hip" store will have anything i can wear.

this is ridiculous. there is probably the same percentage of women who wear size twenty-two as there are who wear size four, the same percentage who wear size thirty as there are who wear size one, and yet stores carry sizes one and four, but not sizes twenty-two and thirty. this is just plain prejudice. there is no excuse. there *is* a market for larger sizes. fat people do not by definition desire to wear too-tight mint green polyester ribbed slacks. i know i don't. i would love to wear flowered sun dresses, baggy jeans, loose-fitting cotton t-shirts, etc. unfortunately, i am limited to whatever lane bryant has on sale, as i am not a millionaire and i don't know how to sew.



it is not impossible to design clothes that look good on fat women, but nobody makes the effort. they just (if we're lucky) enlarge whatever looks good on thin people, and charge us twice as much. (because of "all that extra fabric"? give me a break.) so if you don't happen to look good in size twenty-two ribbed tank tops, you can choose between a business suit and the always available polyester slacks.

i do not want to lose weight, but sometimes when i'm clothes shopping i get so discouraged that i feel that must be the only option. if i ever want to wear anything that i like, i have to be "average" (whatever the hell that is) size. i really have not come up with a solution to this problem. basically, i just wear whatever i can that i think is halfway decent looking. i wear a lot of skirts, and a lot of black t-shirts.

a girl i know told me that a friend of hers was complaining "i don't understand why they make these pretty bathing suits in such big sizes. how stupid." so fat people do not deserve to look good? i suppose this is our "punishment" for being so socially unacceptable. and besides, what are these "big sizes"? i have never found a decent looking bathing suit in any size larger than a fourteen or sixteen.

another thing that makes me really mad is the





whole idea of "one size fits all." i have heard fat comedians making jokes about this (fat comedians telling "fat jokes" really piss me off, but that's another issue.), but i'm really serious. "one size fits all" is just one more way society has of telling me that i do not exist. one size does not, and never will, fit "all."

as i said, i don't have a solution to this problem. but i think it's important for people to understand that this is oppression. and if, by chance, you work at a clothing store, maybe you could request that the management get some clothing in larger sizes, and assure them that there is a market.





i have a little story to tell that really pisses me off. i've never told it to anybody before.

about two years ago some friends and i went to seattle and we ended up at mercer st. denny's. our waiter was really funny, and made good jokes and everybody really liked him. all my friends ordered meals, and i just had some french fries or something. when he took my order, he looked surprised and said "that's all?" i didn't really think anything of it, and i assured him that that was all. then he came back and a couple of my friends ordered desserts. to me, directly, he said "and what'll it be for you?" i smiled and said nothing. he said "our little sweet tooth doesn't want *anything* tonight?" nobody else heard him. i knew what he was implying, but because i was so self conscious, and because i felt in a way that i must deserve it, i didn't say anything to him or my friends.

i guess i must have carried that feeling with me, because i never did tell anybody about it. and when my friends laugh about that night and say what a cool waiter we had, i smile and agree, but inwardly i seethe.



# Fat is so COOL

\* fat is fun! it is neat to slap or poke at. it's also fun to suck on!

\* fat is very womanly... ♀ naturally have a lot of fat, so don't try to get rid of it!

\* fat is punk! fat people are rebelling against societal standards! oohh...

fat = fun = ♀ = punk!



## reasons

many "liberals" like to rationalize fat oppression by associating fat with wealth and greed. this is really sick. if they looked around a little bit, they would realize that in our culture, in order to have wealth and power, you must be thin. i can count the number of very famous fat women in our country on one hand, and even they are laughed at and ridiculed by our society. the group of people in our society with the highest percentage of fat members are women below poverty level--the number is something like 60%. these are not the oppressors of this society, so it looks like that excuse is pretty much invalid, doesn't it?

ok, so another excuse is "well, it's their fault anyway. they have a choice, so why don't they just lose weight?" first of all, there is substantial evidence that this is a complete and total lie--99% of people who lose large amounts of weight gain it all back within two years. we all know that, we see it every day--oprah, for example--yet still we delude ourselves by thinking that it is a choice that fat people make. so then the standard response is "they were just weak--they don't have any will power." i find it hard to believe that women as strong willed and powerful as oprah winfrey, delta burke, myself, and millions of other intelligent, successful women are too "weak." there are many



theories that explain why a person would be fat, only one of which is overeating. in fact, the more i read, the less likely that explanation seems. i don't really eat that much more than my friends do. (and even if eating *is* the reason for fat, it seems odd that the results of something as necessary as food should carry such guilt and shame.)

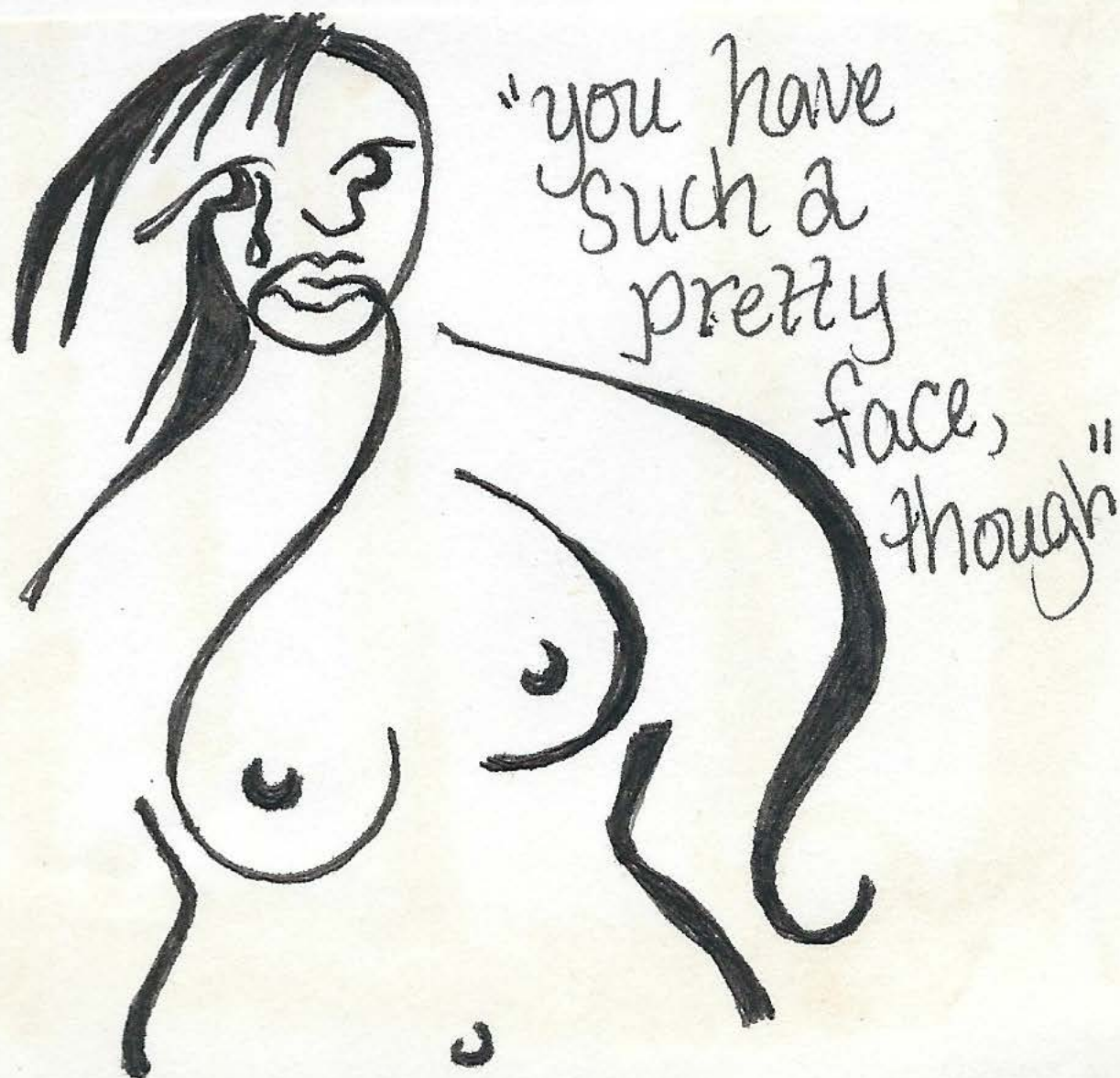
all right, but even if fat people did have the choice to become thin, does that make fat oppression ok? when i complain of fat oppression, i've often been told "well, just lose weight. i know it'll be hard, but you can do it." so instead of changing the oppression, we'll just assimilate? imagine saying to your gay friend who complains of homophobia, "just be straight. i know it'll be hard, but you can do it." just as a gay person can go against nature and *act* straight, a fat person could perhaps go against their nature and lose weight through starvation, bingeing and purging, surgical mutilation, and a heavy dose of psychological abuse. it sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? but this is what we are asked to do every day.

one more thing--stop assuming that when a person loses weight, that it's a healthy change. weight loss is usually a result of one of two things:



a severe illness, or horrendously unhealthy (physically and psychologically) diets. good eating habits rarely change the body drastically.

i'm so upset that ricki lake lost weight. she was the only fat woman i've ever seen who was portrayed through the media as sexy, self confident, popular, and cool. she was the one person who i could point to and say "there's hope." but apparently she lost a bunch of weight. no doubt she will gain it back very soon, but it makes me mad that she gave in and conformed. she didn't have to.





## ***Mother Earth is a perfect sphere.***

*my body is soft, feminine, round, curvy, sensual, womanly. with myself, i am not afraid of my body. i am very female, very goddesslike.*

it is no huge surprise that in our society, women are expected to look like little boys. no breasts, no hips, no thighs. nothing female. men do not want to be threatened by a powerful woman.

it seems natural that men should be depicted with lines, women with circles. circles are essential to a woman--her menstrual cycle, her breasts, her hips, her vagina. why should the rest of her be any less circular?



***“the goddess was fat”***



## harassment

people seem to have this idea (which is largely enforced by the media) that fat girls are not victims of sexual harassment. this (surprise surprise) is a lie. duh.

there was this boy, dick (not his real name), a couple months ago who was constantly harassing me--not really heavy harassment--just little stuff like "hey hot stuff," "whool! foxy mama!" etc., every time i saw him. he was a "friend" and i think that he thought he was giving me really nice compliments or something. and despite the fact that i told him repeatedly to cut it out, that i didn't take it as a compliment, and that it made me really uncomfortable, he did not stop. once he came up to me and said "hey hot stuff." i said "don't say that." he said, very loudly so anybody within twenty feet could hear, "hey, don't flaunt it! when you're the hottest thing in town. . . blah blah blah. . ." totally ignoring my request. another time he saw me from about fifteen feet down the hall, and yelled "whoa! look at that outfit! you look HOT!" finally i said "dick, i really don't like that. stop it." then i tried to nicely explain why, but he kept interrupting me, so all he ever let me say was "i'm sorry, but. . ." he still didn't get the hint. he did it again, but caught himself when i gave him a dirty look.



that day i told some friends about it. i was with three boys (who i *thought* were cool) and a close girl friend of mine, m\_\_\_\_ (i can't think of a fake name to call her). two of the boys (i'll call them jake and josh) knew dick and didn't even listen to me, just defended him. they said "he's just messing with you... dick's cool, he's just joking around... *get a sense of humor.*" (it makes me so angry to write that last line that right now i feel like smashing the hell out of this computer. fuck i'm mad. GRRRRRRRRRR!!!! FUCKTHEMIWANTTOFUCKINGKILLTHEM!!!!!!) ok, i guess it's out of my system now. well, actually it's not, but i should probably continue anyway.) anyway, they kept up with this, and i was getting really frustrated and was almost crying, so m\_\_\_\_ tried to help me out by telling them about this time when she was harassed and how it made her feel. jake and josh's responses were "oh man, that's totally fucked up. that's so fucked. that's so shitty. how dare someone treat you like that." in other words, "m\_\_\_\_, you have the right to be offended, because you are sexy, but nomy, your harassment doesn't count, because he didn't mean it." this is a popular belief-- that if a person isn't "sexy" then they are not sexually harassed or assaulted, and if they are it's



not the same, because fat girls don't have to escape from being defined as sex objects. what shit. all girls are defined as sex objects, no matter what they look like, because one way or another, men judge them on whether or not they want to sleep with them. and does insincerity on the part of the harasser make it any less painful or humiliating for the woman who is harassed? of course not. i am still on friendly terms with jake and josh, but after that incident i don't feel that i can talk to them about anything remotely personal, and in the back of my mind there is always that voice saying "what a fucker. he doesn't respect me, why am i talking to him?"

as for dick, i tried a couple of times to explain to him why i didn't like what he was doing. ironically, he is one of those boys who sees himself as sympathetic to the women's movement. so instead of listening to me and saying "yeah, you're right. i really fucked up," he kept interrupting me and saying "you know, women really need to stick up for themselves, and stand up to men. you can't let yourself be treated like shit." he totally turned it around on me, made it seem like *i* hadn't lived up to what i should have done, and completely negated any blame on himself. i doubt if he even gave the whole thing a second thought after he walked away.



the other day i read the worst fucking comic in the world. it was "b.c." which i usually hate anyway because it's totally right wing christian fanatic. but this particular comic showed the character called "fat broad" bending over, when a guy comes by and says "nice bod, toots." so she starts screaming "harassment! sexual harassment" then she goes to this place labeled "petty claims," and tells the guy there "i was sexually harassed. a man said 'nice bod, toots' to me." the guy says "i would hardly call that sexual harassment." fat broad retorts "oh yeah? well what do you call it, then?" to which he responds "acute myopia."

shall i count the things about this comic that offend me? ok, i shall.

- 1) the character has no name, just "fat broad."
- 2) the harassment itself is pretty offensive. "nice bod, toots"? pretty shitty.
- 3) she goes running all over the place yelling "harassment! sexual harassment!" thus implying that people who complain of sexual harassment are making too big of a deal over it.
- 4) the place she goes to report it is labeled "petty claims." so we are led to believe that sexual harassment is a petty issue.
- 5) it's stated that the harasser must have had some eye disorder in order to say that fat broad had a nice bod. so fat women cannot be sexy.



6) the moral of the story is that fat women have no right to be upset when they are harassed.

pretty cool, huh? i can't believe that somebody actually thought this comic was *funny*.

it's also important to remember that sexual harassment is not always "complimentary." (i know that no harassment is complimentary, but i can't think of another word to explain what i mean.) people usually think that sexual harassment is when someone makes rude, unwanted advances --i.e. "hey, baby, let's fuck." but "hey fat bitch, nobody would ever want to fuck you" is sexual harassment also, and is just as painful and degrading.

this is kind of off the subject, but i want to say that one thing that reinforces this type of thinking is political correctness. with p.c. you don't have to think about issues and figure out why something is offensive and degrading to another person, you just have to avoid the right words or behaviors. this is why jake and josh were so quick to jump in with "oh my god, that's so fucked up," when m\_\_\_ told her story, but were totally shitty to me about my harassment. since my experience does not fit into the textbook definition of sexual harassment, and has not been stamped with the label "sexist," jake and josh responded in typical fucked-up boy manner.



am i your good girl?





so that was issue #1 of "i'm so fucking beautiful." i'm not sure if i'll be doing it again or not, since i have my other zine and everything. but i really wanted to get out my feelings on these issues. i hope i've made you think about it some. i don't expect all of your attitudes to change by just reading this--i still am in the process of getting rid of all my fucked-up sizeist attitudes, so i can't expect to change the world through my zine. i just really hope you will either start or continue your process.

please write me with any comments you may have.

♥ nomy lamm  
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thank you soul sisters marty, molly, shawna, leeza, sash, stephanie, kirsten, and all riot grrrls everywhere.

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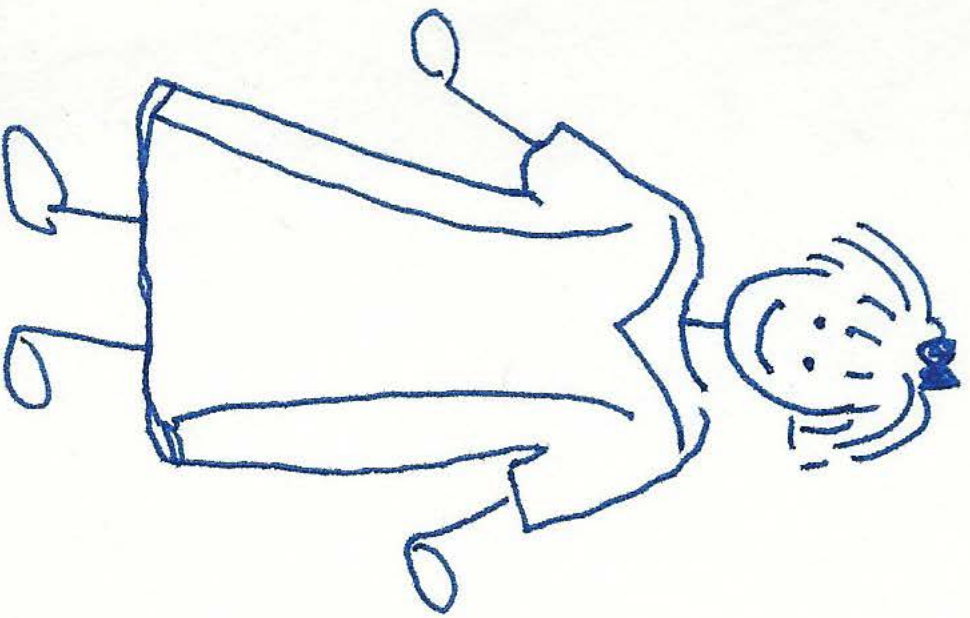
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GOES  
HERE!



for my dear  
sweet friend:

