

I am the poet Maimu Brushwood.

I'm not quite sure what to think if an artist uses their performance as therapy.

But you know what?

This is exactly that kind of performance.

I want to confess one thing here.

I am menstruation-jealous.

I know that menstruation can cause body dysphoria in some people. Therefore, my topic might be sensitive.

But I want to tell my perspective, my story.

It hurt me when my twin sister started menstruating.

I was super jealous and envious.

She was told, "Now you have become a woman."

I did not.

And I didn't start menstruating.

Even though I hoped I would.

I colored my mother's sanitary pads with a marker and reveled in the thought that soon I would start menstruating, I would have my period.

But it never started.

Over the years, menstruation has also separated me from my friends and colleagues.

"Well, it's easy for you, since you don't have periods."

"You don't understand, because you don't have periods."

"These are women's issues."

"Men have it much easier."

But I'm not a man. And it hasn't been easy for me.

And yet I don't bleed.

Yet I don't bleed from where I would like to.

My sister was congratulated when her period started.

I remember that Grandma gave her money.

I would like to experience that same thing.

I would like to be congratulated.

I would like to bleed today.

And I intend to bleed today.

And I hope that then you will congratulate me.

Does this sound odd enough?

PERFORMANCE

I was a little nervous that my non-binary parts might show.

Now that I feel like a woman,

I would like to recite a poem for you:

As a child, I could be anything:

I mostly played with girls.

But I was labeled a girl already in kindergarten,

But I never gave up.

As soon as I could, I wore a dress.

It irritated my older brother and his friends.

When I was in the first grade,

They said I walked like a woman,

on slippery ice, wearing a bra.

Then I dressed exactly as I wanted,

but as school progressed, I wished to be unnoticed.

I realized I would never grow into a woman,

when my pain didn't turn into menstrual blood.

I thought maybe I should feel like a boy

And then they started calling me gay.

I started searching for myself in middle school,
and got bags and spit thrown at me in return.

I don't thank my bullies,
so don't give them any more credit.
They almost ruined my life,
burned the last of me to ashes,
but from there I rose,
like a phoenix I soared,

I trusted that in the future I
would have space under the rainbow just like you.
As you can see, I eventually became a hot package
and even after all I've been through, my poems
exude love for fellow humans.

I hope that no one even steps on an earthworm,
extend your love to the smallest creature.
I hope for safety for queer friends in the sea,
where seahorses are in great danger.

I wish this could be paradise for everyone
and that we could solve the eco-crisis.
I want to live in harmony,
float in love and peace.
Roll in the sand and swim.
Drink, eat, and make love.
In my own wonderful body,

Be part of the world's species.

Thank you and have a wonderful evening!