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2019 Words and Music Competition, poetry category, winner

All the Men Who Own My Underwear

In the Craigslist ad, my naked back is to the camera. I'm on my knees, a pair of black Calvin Klein knock-offs hitched high on my hips.

The top tier of my price sheet was underwear worn while performing oral sex on another woman. *Smell your way to voyeurism*: \$90.

Other men wanted the shit stains, menstrual bleed-throughs, ovulation discharges, or the sweat drench of a long run.

Whatever service was selected, I wore them for a day. Maybe masturbated, if convenient or the client was a repeat.

Then the spent cotton briefs (purchased in bulk on Amazon) were double zipped inside plastic bags and overnighted for a fee.

My character's name was Margot. She was a college student struggling, a red lipstick loving, black lingerie wearing, businesswoman building a brand.

What I mean is that I kissed the thank you notes in scarlet, slid them inside the second plastic bag, and scribbled coupon codes on the back.

I've heard sex work called *selling yourself*, like I should have felt that I was losing something in each transaction

In total, my graduate school applications cost me 32 pairs. All it felt like was laundry.