

Hype and Melancholy

by Ann Bogle

Sonia assures us at her weblog that she does not take medications even for misanthropy. I like her entry on misanthropy. It reads like a description of melancholy—on not liking the enjoyable things one usually likes—and that feeling of not liking enjoyable things lasting for a period of time, of days or weeks then it passing, and her interest in things returning. My former boyfriend spent three days each month in perfect retreat. He went to his mother's house, where he sometimes lived, avoided calls and callers, and got in his bed. Those days he let me go with him. I got in his bed and paid attention to his supple, vibrant skin and petted his body. He said it was a “male period” and he didn't want anyone except me to come near him during that time. He rode out a month's worth of energy and hype that way. He was in a rock band. He didn't take medications, either.

You may think: No one locks someone up for no reason, but I thought: no doctor diagnoses something serious for no known medical reason. As someone who was there, I knew what hidden things we might or might not have been accepting. Sonia banks on hidden things in the minds of other people, whereas I bank on what I know. She drove around one spring with her eye peeled for Missouri license plates due to her crush on a man from Missouri. Did she follow the cars or just notice them? Where did the license plates take her? I once got out of an impoverished neighborhood in Chicago by following a Volvo. I had taken a wrong turn to get into that neighborhood in the first place and was lost and afraid until I saw the Volvo and got behind it as if I had located a telephone booth.

