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'Look at me, I said to the glass in a whisper, a breath.'

Listen to her. She is telling you about her adolescence. She is telling you about one particular 'bent that lasted three days. *I was getting blacked out again in the morning*, she says. *Smoking cigarette:* Nine hours in her mum's garden, unable to stand up. It disturbed her for a long time. She felt sick e time she thought about it, not because she could remember it, but because she couldn't. She coul only recreate it. *That was the only time I wished that I was dead.* With survival comes loss – loss of of time, of your sense of self. She didn't know what she had or hadn't done when *black out drunk*, never say because she *lost so much time*. She was there but didn't see it happen.

Anita Harris would call her a 'have-not' girl. Adolescent girls are made to embody society's fears ar hopes for the future, and as such are judged on their capacity for self-invention. Adolescent girls ar expected to make good choices for themselves. As Harris writes in *Future Girl*, they have become focus for the construction of an ideal late modern subject who is self-making, resilient, and flexible. everyone can be a 'can-do' girl, a good Future Girl. Not all young women are 'killing it'.

The woman speaking in Jordan Baseman's *Blackout*, on view at TAP in Southend-on-Sea, was a 'not' girl: she drank until she blacked out, was promiscuous and deceitful, and had no regard for he health or her safety. She says she didn't do anything for five years, that now she feels in-between: matured from her problem with alcohol and yet 'behind' everyone else. She knows some things. Sf thought her problem with alcohol set her apart from other people. That it made her 'interesting' – sl was living in a different way to everyone else. She had chosen it. But she was a girl who made bad choices, consumed the wrong substances and abused her body. She was not, in other words, self-making, resilient or flexible in the 'right' way. A have-not girl is a failure. *My speech would slur. Peo, couldn't understand me. I'd get black out drunk and drive my car around.* And yet, you listen to her with empathy. She exposes herself as vulnerable. She describes an adolescence coloured by self-destruction, not self-making, and in doing so exposes the future girl as an ideal few could ever live to.

In his re-presentation of personal stories, Baseman exposes the narrative strategies that make pers experience, so often felt to be messy and chaotic, coherent to the person telling it, a person who c never really *remember*, only ever recreate. The narrator of *Blackout* describes the sight of her body mirror. She saw a girl who looked fucked-up and tired. *My eyes looked weird, I just looked weird. F around the edges. Weird dead eyes.* The failure of sight – blacking out while drunk – precludes a fa of the body, which has become a poor copy of itself. A moment of clarity that comes 'out of nowhe she could never feel like that again. *That's how it happened.* How else does a survivor make sense their survival, and of their loss? British artist Stuart Brisley, the narrator of Baseman's *The Last Wa* (2011), describes his recovery after witnessing a man burning in a field while taking his dog for a w: *Slowly I got over it, slowly.* Both realisations appear 'out of the blue.'

Patricia Lyons, the narrator of *Veil*, also on view at TAP, describes a loss that most of us have felt a some point in our lives – the kind that desire can induce within a culture structured around shame a concealment when it comes to sex. *Losing the self can be a highly horrific and violent experience*, s says. *It can be transcendent.* It's as if the mirror in *Blackout* could speak.

Lyons uses simile and metaphor to describe the experience of shame when one desires to excess: *desire is like a nuclear reactor* (there's no getting away from it, no matter how far down you bury it). Shame, on the other hand, *is a veil*. Lyons confesses that she often incorporates a disembodied ey her own camera – into her masturbation fantasies. *Am I sinning?* She asks. *Am I watching myself – that where the sin lies?* This camera is hers, a screen in which she sees her body as another would *become the bodies on the screen.* (When she uses the second person she is also speaking for hers and when she uses the first person she is also speaking for you.) Lyons describes how the viewer t and desires, how you feel shame about that desire when it is separated off from your body, how sh can take root there because it's so bound up with the self and the body already. Her thoughts on s love, desire and sin loop and undermine each other – *Maybe... Maybe not. I'm running around.* He thinking binds itself in knots – isn't that how desire works too?

Shame is a tool of culture, says Lyons. *It dissects and dismantles corpses.* Survival, and the guilt ar shame that plays out in relation to societal pressures to 'overcome' difficulty, to submit to the law a judge oneself accordingly, is a recurrent theme in Baseman's films. The narrator of *Nasty Piece of* (2009) recalls being raped by a man he met on King's Road. *He fucked me. And it hurt. And it was horrible. And I hated it. I look back and think: why didn't I just kill myself? When I look back I think: I was hell.* Life was hell back then because as a young gay man he was vulnerable, firstly from the th imposed by other men, but also from the law, which refused to protect him against violence or dise and threatened to take away his freedom altogether. He felt like he had no choice but to lie. The girlhood described in *Blackout* is also subject to a kind of societal violence: bearing the weight of t world's hopes and fears for the future. After all, shame is felt by and on the body. 'When shamed,' Ahmed writes in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 'one's body seems to burn up with the negatio is perceived (self-negation); and shame impresses upon the skin, as an intense feeling of the subje

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