so i began this assignment thinking about “embodiment,” but there’s a problem:

my body and i try to keep a healthy distance from each other.

we don't get along very well: we just can't seem to communicate or agree, no matter how many compromises are haggled.

we make progress toward unity only very occasionally--when i pay a stranger to drill holes or ink into my skin, or when the hair dye job goes well--but overall i wouldn't call our relationship healthy.

i will not deny that it has given me advantages, although genetics and luck deserve the credit a little more than this particular vessel does. no offense.

this body has white skin that makes other white people feel safety and camaraderie, makes them grant me the benefit of the doubt: shopkeepers, professors, application-reviewers, managers, landlords... policeman, nazis.

also, this body is sized so that it is easy enough to buy clothes for, and born healthy enough that it allows me to mobilize,  breathe, and hear without major complaint. (i do have some patch notes about the vision, though.)

but otherwise, this body has exhausted, misrepresented, deceived, and endangered me.

although before i get aggressive, i will give some benefit of the doubt that oftentimes it was really trying to help, especially before we genuinely got to know each other.

my father had always wanted a daughter and was yet to receive one (well, one that he knew of, although that’s a different story) and it wanted to give me favor in his eyes, so it doled out my chromosomes and hormones and fatty deposits and it stretched my vocal chords without asking my opinion. that always seemed a little rude to me--it could have checked my subconscious registry first and seen my listing for the physique of an unclockable queercoded disney villain.

(it must not have known about the double ostracization of a rugged but extremely sensitive child socialized to nurture to the point of endangering themselves, about the double violence of a non-gendered being occupying a hyper-gendered body, about the double complication of an optimistically queer sexuality in a self-hating creature who would forget they had hands if they weren’t constantly bleeding. but to my body’s engineering credit, i didn’t really know either.)

also, i know i just complained about my eyesight, but i do look a little weird without my glasses, so perhaps it knew how oddly my face would end up being shaped.

but other things blur the line between thoughtlessness and intentional harm--particularly the gray matter portion of my body. it seems almost like it was making up for lost time when it vomited a good portion of the dsm into my soul even as it knew i would grow up in a town where nami was a only a super weird name for someone’s grandmother. it wove me the world’s least comfortable quilt of conflicting, comorbid acronyms: my ocd’s practicality obsession argues incessantly with blessing-curse of autistic hyperempathy, the constant terror flailing of anxiety punches worthlessly at the boulder of my depression’s executive dysfunction… etc.

i do wish it had just given me a list when we first met, because not knowing what was wrong until sophomore year of college never did me any favors. like i said, we’re not great communicators.

my body and i do not get along, but i have never been especially kind to it either--i neglect and patchwork-scar and bind and pollute and pull at it, and my breakfast is pretty exclusively donuts with strawberry frosting and sprinkles. i have a rather boring uniform of clothing that makes me feel safe, and i give it really stupid haircuts in my bathroom.

i do hope for in some kind of eventual compromise, but i don’t want to ignore the way i was forged in incongruity.

we fight, but this back-and-forth is, you know, who i am.