

**Esmé Beaumont**

**[I am almost 25 years old]**

I am almost 25 years old. I cannot remember a time  
When I didn't feel, beneath my clothes and the fallen  
Leaves of my skin, the seeping rot of loneliness. I walk  
Barefoot across the damp ground of my thoughts,  
Squelch the compost of old text messages between my toes,  
Obsessive over the kind of love they want reserved  
For romance but I am too porous, every touch soaks in,  
Seeping and spreading, mycorrhizal in my dependency on  
Your voice, all 25 years of me dissolving into the bed,  
The stain anxiety leaves, I cannot remember  
A time when my shadow didn't leave the oily residue  
Of embarrassment on everything it touched, my mouth  
Soils everything, my speech smeared into your clothes,  
I cannot remember a time when I felt clean enough.