Spring 2004

Shortest Woman Living

Stephanie Lenox

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation

Available at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss61/24

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in CutBank by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
Madge Bester is just 2ft. 1.5 inches tall. Sadly, she suffers *osteogenesis imperfecta* (characterized by brittle bones and deformities of the skeleton.) — Guinness World Records 2002

Tell me what other way is there to suffer. My fragile bones attract the eye — there is no reason to feel sorry for me. Fifty cents for all you can stand to look at. Twice as much to pick me up, carry me with you around the room. You must imagine me a foreshortened version of your own worn-out body. It does hurt a little. But this is my life, right? I’m the living one, says this book of broken records, which makes me different from other tiny skeletons stretching out at last in abbreviated coffins. I’m listed between the shortest man and woman ever. When I die, my living title will be given away. I should be glad. The others grew beyond their lives — nails, hair, and bones crowding their resting place.

Someone once told me that grief fills a person the way gas fills a room — expanding to take any space it’s given. This book gives thirty-four words for what I must endure — my entry into a painful world. Take these words into your mouth and carry them with you.
Every day I open the book, bend back the spine, and read how “Sadly, she suffers.”

It’s all true.

I won’t promise these words will grow easier to bear.