

Hey Merfolk! MéShelle here.

I'm so excited that you downloaded this FREE poetry sample! Who doesn't love FREE, right? It's always my goal to bless you, inspire you, and educate you, so everything in my little shop is geared towards that goal, especially if it's FREE!

Thus, I wanted to give you a little background on what you've tapped into here. My debut collection, *A Memoir: Life in Poetry*, was written after a period of healing from a serious time of trauma, heartbreak, and a profound sense of loss. I had spent a LOT of time looking into a mirror, unsure of anything about the person looking back at me. What did she like anymore? What kind of person had she intended on becoming? What were her goals? What made her a *her*? There were so many questions like that, at one time, had seemed easy to answer but were now mysteries. However, most importantly, they were suddenly mysteries I wanted to solve. And so I began my journey of healing and discovery which led to a pretty amazing person that I'm still learning and loving better each day.

As I began to fall more and more in love with myself, I began to appreciate my story and the impact it could have on others. That's what inspired my poetry collection. I've always felt that I could be my most authentic self through stories, and through poetry most of all. Each piece in this collection was an honor to discover and write. They are also my way of honoring the stories of those who came together to make me who I am. But I also want to honor you with these lessons and realizations I've written down. I want to bring something meaningful to your story as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to go on a journey together!

XOXOXOXO

MéShelle

Am I a Woman?

I was born with hips
wide enough to span oceans,
breasts the size of the moon,
a belly shaped like a mountain
and a fertile valley below.

So, they say I'm a woman.

I was born with hatred for
skirts and dresses
nail polish on my fingers
makeup on my face
and being told what to do.

So, was I still a woman?

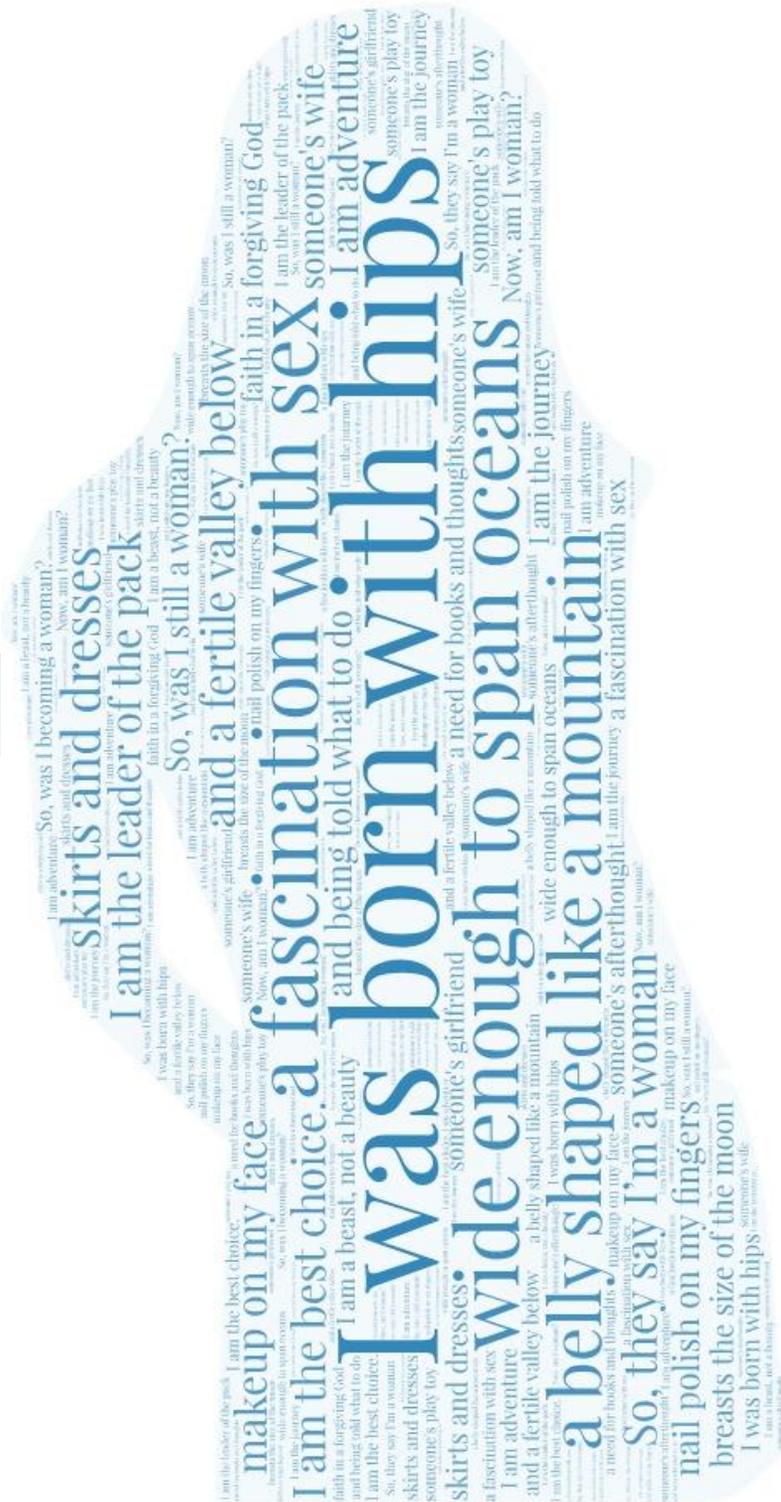
I grew up with
a need for books and thoughts,
a fascination with sex,
faith in a forgiving God
and a love for pet rocks.

So, was I becoming a woman?

I grew up on
playing video games alone,
wrestling and fishing with daddy;
beating the neighbor boys at
football,
and getting dirty with strays.

So, did I act like a woman?

I grew up



being told I was a girl
looking like a girl
feeling like a girl,
and didn't know what girls
were, looked, or felt like.

So, what was a woman?

I became
someone's play toy.
someone's afterthought.
someone's girlfriend.
someone's wife.

Now, am I a woman?

I began to love
"throw-on" dresses
books about magic
books about sex
going to church
the color of nail polish
farting in public places
sitting with my legs open
sex in public places
tigers, cats, dogs, and snakes
friendships with other women
stories about faith
debates about sex
discussions about race
and arguments about womanhood

Now, who is a woman?

I am.

I am the leader of the pack.

McShelle Fae
Author.



Mermaid.

I am the best choice.

I am a bad decision.

I am brown sugar and honey.

I am the dirty fighter.

I am the beast, not the beauty.

I am the burp when you're full.

I am a Slytherin and a Hufflepuff.

I am selfishness and cruelty.

I am sacrifice and giving.

I am an adventure.

I am the journey.

I told you I'm a woman.



MéShelle Fae
Author. Poet. Pirate Mermaid.

Worthless

Worthless can be quantified.

It's the age
I first called myself fat

It's the price
of innocence
after my first porn at 8

It's the amount
of tears
after their divorce

It's how many times
he looked at me
in total disgust

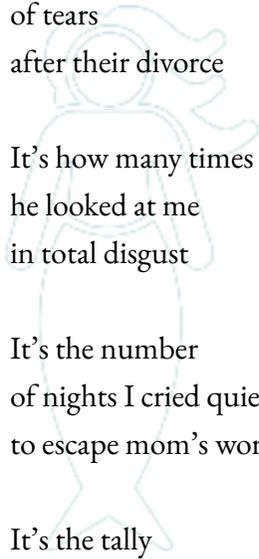
It's the number
of nights I cried quietly
to escape mom's worry

It's the tally
of men I needed
to call me beautiful

It's the sum
of people I allowed
to tell me who I am

It's the word count
of lies I could stomach
in one day

It's the percentage



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of myself
I could admit to liking

It's the fraction
of me
left after a breakup

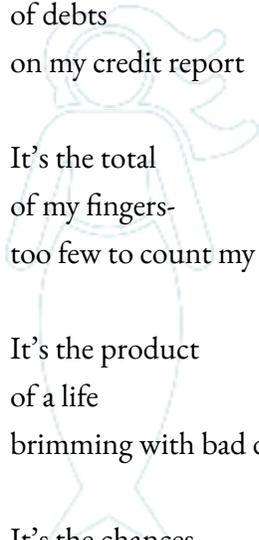
It's the cost
of a scholarship
I lost twice

It's the calculation
of debts
on my credit report

It's the total
of my fingers-
too few to count my failures

It's the product
of a life
brimming with bad decisions

It's the chances
of me being convinced
that I'm anything but perfect.



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Author. Poet. Pirate Mermaid.

Letter from The Bridge Builder

You will not forget me when I'm gone.
For what I've built today,
will live long past our settled dust,
to guide you on your way.

For what I've built today,
you may forget my name and face.
To guide you on your way,
follow where my hands and feet were placed.

You may forget my name and face,
but you'll never know how treacherous was the tide.
Follow where my hands and feet were placed.
You'll know the marks I've left you as your guide.

But you'll never know how treacherous was the tide.
You won't stumble in the path that swallowed greater men than I.
You'll know the marks I've left you as your guide,
as you cross safely to the other side.

You won't stumble in the path that swallowed greater men than I.
It will live long past our settled dust.
As you cross safely to the other side,
you will not forget me when I'm gone.

[A pantoum-styled, persona poem inspired by the renowned piece "The Bridge Builder" by Will Allen Dromgoole, a fellow Southern Belle poet.]