

how not to be yourself

i learned
to like black tea and
sugarless coffee, because it
was bitter and left a sour taste
in my mouth like you did.

the worst feeling in the world was
listening to you list off things that you
hated about people, and realizing that each
and every one of them could be applied to me. you
didn't like people who laughed too loudly because
it got on your nerves, who wore sneakers with dresses,
who were overly insecure, who had
really short hair, who had brown eyes, who
spoke with a stutter. the list went on and on.
so even though boots hurt my feet, i stopped wearing
converse. and even though it upset me, i grew my
hair out. i learned to talk slowly, and i watched what i said,
and i laughed with my hands over my mouth.

and every single time you look at me i realize how much
i've changed to make you happy and i want to rip you
out of my life but i'm one of the only people who have
stayed and i promised i would never leave you alone.
so even if i worked up the nerve to one day walk away
from you, the scars you left on
my skin would remain
visible.

i.n.w.