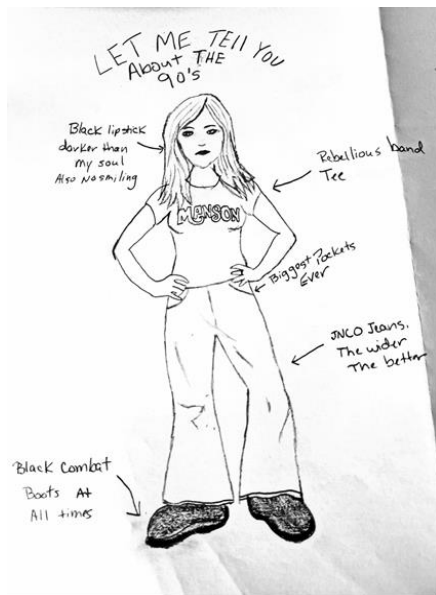


The Absolutely True Diary of a Metamorphosis

By Maryann Bush

Maybe it was the drugs. Maybe it was the sex. Maybe it was Marilyn Manson. My teen years were a time where I could only see what was right in front of me. I didn't think about what I could become later in life. I lived in the moment and said damn the consequences.



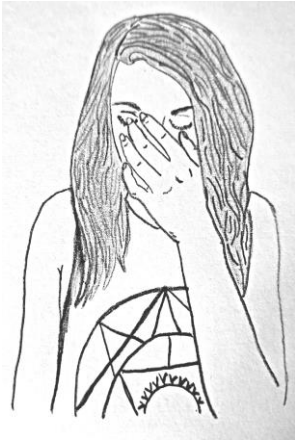
These years were spent much like the ravenous caterpillar. I had an empty pit and began consuming everything and everyone in my path. I fed on the fight and feasted on the struggle. I took everything my mother had to give and then demanded more.



We would fight and the most heinous words would come out of my mouth. I would spit vile, evil words all over the people who were trying to help the most. I don't remember why I did it or the words we exchanged, but in an uncontrollable force of anger I drew back and hit her in the face. I cannot remember what followed the hit, but I do remember the expression of

disappointment and shock on her bruised face. It ripped through me and shook my soul at its core. A small light of change flickered inside me, but it was engulfed by a dark emptiness inside of me that was still hungry for more and there was no stopping it.

I found myself in a tiny room with a therapist who evaluated my behavior. She decided that I needed to stay there for a week for a full evaluation. That brought me to a moment where I had a choice to keep consuming or to transform. What had I chosen to do? Fight. I put up a good one too. It took five orderlies, one straight jacket, one stretcher, and one tranquilizer shot in my ass. I woke up in a padded room angrier than ever and that led to yet another shot. Next time I woke up, I made the right choice of controlling my appetite.



My stay at the hospital was not useless. I learned one thing there that still sticks with me today. I had to climb a rock wall and my first attempt was me yelling that I could not do it and I fell. The counselor made me do it again, but this time when I felt I could not continue I had to keep saying that I could. I made it to the top. For the first time, in a long time, I felt like I was capable of becoming more. Seven days later, I was granted freedom. I left with medication and a sense of *I can do this*. I felt like I was in control and was on the path of change finally!

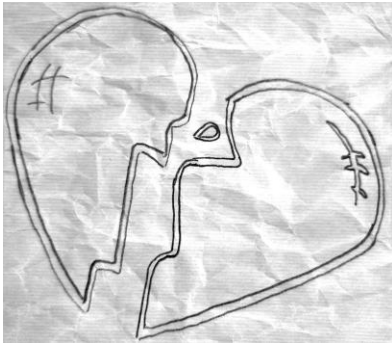


However, things quickly unraveled, and it wasn't long until the emptiness came back. This time I quit taking my anger out on others and began to consume myself. I cut myself. I indulged in risky sexual activities that usually included drugs.

I didn't know at the time, but this next choice was the biggest choice I would ever make in my life. I met a guy. He seemed so amazing and I just wanted a little taste. On our first date, I wore my favorite blue top that opened at my belly button with a floor length, black skirt. It had a dangerous slit up the left side. I paired it with very sexy black, strappy wedges and topped off my bottom with a red lacey thong. Everything was so new and amazing. He took me to places I had never been. I thought this was what it was like in a relationship. This was love and it was real. I had found it! We were going to be together forever, and

eventually we would get married and grow together. Blah, blah, blah.....

After six months of pure ignorant bliss, I learned the difference between love and lust. As it turned out, he was also devouring everything in his path and I had bit off more than I could chew. His hunger was insatiable and he is still consuming everything in his path to this very day.



I hadn't noticed the changes that were occurring. At fifteen when your breasts get bigger, you do not question it or argue with it. I saw it as a blessing, but then my pants would no longer fit. Red flags had risen and sirens boomed so I acquired an obscene amount of pregnancy tests via a five-finger discount and every single test came back positive.

I decided to just keep all this positivity to myself. Before long, it was my first trimester of school and my pregnancy. I had swim class, but the orange, spandex suit began to reveal my secret. I decided to stop going because denial could not



hide this bump in a wet swimsuit. I was scared about what was happening inside me and what others would think. I began cocooning myself inside oversized hoodies to protect my secret. I began eating more so I could wrap myself in a protective layer of fat to divert attention.

A few more months passed and I realized I couldn't keep hiding this. The one person who I knew would protect me during this change was my mother only after she didn't kill me when she found out. After a very stressful, yet relieving, conversation, everything was out in the open. Some people had some negative things to say and some tried to make the experience enjoyable. A new life was supposed to be celebrated no matter how old the mother was or the choices she had made. The air was cleared, but I couldn't help but stay completely shielded during this time of great change.



My much older cousin wanted to throw me a baby shower because that was the normal thing to do when a baby was on the way and she was always super supportive. It was an awkward occasion attended by a few overly judgmental family members. We celebrated a new life created by a girl who had not thought this through. I could not drive. I didn't have a job or money of my own. I had put my education on

the back burner. I had been on probation because I shoplifted from the local Wal-Mart. I was the epitome of white trash.

Gifts at my shower included traditional baby necessities. There were no fancy items or anything from a registry, as so many couples have. The most awkward gift was a stack of lottery cards that I was not



even of age to cash in if I had won. It was like they were pointing out how young I was. And you could probably have guessed that no one from the father's side of the family attended.

Later on, while looking at myself I saw my smooth skin now covered in stretch marks and acne from hormones gone crazy. My one-hundred-pound lean temple of glory had doubled in size. My feet had ballooned from a size six to a size nine, and I couldn't even reach the damn things.



The person I once was no longer existed. All the

emptiness and anger I had always felt no longer controlled me. In a weird way, the baby shower was the celebration of a new life for not only a baby, but for me. My body changed into something I did not recognize. The thing about a caterpillar is that it only knows it is a caterpillar. A beautiful butterfly could land right next to it and it would never imagine that it too could fly. Accepting this new life meant it was time to shed myself of the past. The cocoon I had wrapped around myself began to unravel and I emerged transformed into what I was always supposed to be: A Mother.

