

## ALL OF ME

I once bought a black fuzzy jumper that said Want It All. I bought it because of the slogan. I thought it described me. I really do want it all! And only later do I wonder if it's realistic to hold so much joy and love if it will all fit inside me, or if I'll burst someday. And what would it look like if I burst? I'd burst and spill out colorful streams of glitter. I'll cause a flood. I'll slowly flood the landscape, everything will be a rainbow, sticky with glitter, with Kaca. Somehow it reminds me of the description of female ejaculation in Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*.

Let's squirt the whole world, it'll only help!

Laughing and fucking.

Maybe I'm too radical for you if body neutrality isn't enough for me. It's not enough for me personally. Not only do I want you to understand and respect that my body is mine and you have no right to mess with it. I also want you to watch me love, admire, display, pamper, work with, and use my body with love, admiration, and respect! Radical self-love, radical body positivity, the emancipatory power of a big belly!

Margaret Elysia Garcia wrote in her essay *In the Belly of Fuckability*: „If you want to be banned from social media, don't show a penis or a vagina or even a nipple. Show a belly.” And one of the women on the *Sádlo* podcast noted that the biggest punk is not having dyed hair, piercings, and tattoos, the biggest punk is being fat and not being ashamed of it, liking yourself, and being open about it. I certainly try everything! And I top it off with funny, colourful, sparkly outfits and jewellery.

My favourite superheroines are drag queens. Their personalities and work are about emancipation, empowerment, political awareness, fun, physicality, joy, sharing different types of bodies and emotions, enjoying awkwardness and life.

All of me. This is all of me and it's beautiful. I stare in fascination at how soft and squishy my body is, how it shakes when I move. And what it can do! And I don't mean that in any ableist way, every body can do something different, which is great. My big tits are so long that they can spin around! It's kind of painful, but it's super fun!

My body can also create life. It created my son, gave birth to him, nursed him and fed him for the next five years. If that's not a miracle, then nothing is. The superpowers of my body amaze me every day. When I look at my son and remember what it was like to carry him under my heart and then move him from my belly to my stomach and watch him grow, I can't look at my beautiful, big, soft belly as anything other than a miracle. In Czech they used to call the belly life. The fruit of your life. And now we hate it, we hide it, we pull it in.

My belly is pampered.

If there is a threat of you taking and appropriating my body, I will actively take it back.

I'm reflecting on my experience of sexualised violence.

Sometimes it's still hard for me to admit that I've been raped several times in my life. And for years I didn't even realise it had happened. We need to redefine rape, not only in law, but also in our minds.

Slowly, over the years, I opened the door to understanding. And that train journey opened the floodgates.

I can't even remember the first time someone looked at my body differently, the first time someone touched me without asking, or the first time someone made a stupid comment. It was all a long, long time ago, I probably wasn't even a teenager. I remember when I was afraid to walk home alone at night. Even in first grade I didn't feel safe on the streets, although that was more because of the bullying.

But still! Experiences of sexualised violence do not define me. At some point in my teenage years, I decided to define myself!

My soul isn't fat and it's fat forever at the same time. Let me explain. Ever since I was a little girl, my family told me I was fat, so often and so insistently that I believed it. This belief had nothing to do with reality. Even when I wasn't that fat, even when I lost a lot of weight, my soul remained just as fat. It's a pain in the ass because it's hard to lose weight of your soul. But on the other hand, it is definitely handy to have a big soft soul. And I don't think there's anything small about me. My heart is big too. It really is. I've heard that it's borderline size and that a bit more would be dangerous for me. Even my vagina is big, my wonderful gynaecologist told me recently. Deep, soft, multi-layered. Definitely a divine, cosy den.

She's not ashamed at all! Well, Kaca is not ashamed of her body. It's funny, but I'm embarrassed when I sing. It doesn't make sense to me to be ashamed of my body. I'd rather be ashamed of something that doesn't work, like singing, but I'm not ashamed of something that works and is great. And I would recommend it to you, it's really nice. You don't have to be ashamed of having a belly, because all people have a belly. If rocks have overhangs, it doesn't shock anyone. Everybody can have overhangs. And it's practical because you can hide something underneath it.

I do not want to make the pampering of my large body sound all positive, but sometimes I feel its limits. I get out of breath when I dance or climb stairs. I wheeze and gasp. My upper abdomen gets stuck on my lower abdomen, then on my thighs or breasts during some movements. Like when I bend over or do yoga. And short distances that my mind can easily cover are suddenly inaccessible for my body.

And I haven't even mentioned the marks of life on the body. The most significant is a big, beautiful scar on my chest where my heart is. In a nutshell, at the age of twenty-one, I had a pulmonary embolism, probably as a result of hormonal birth control. A clot (*klat*) got into my heart and luckily got stuck in the atypical aneurysm between the valves (*valfs*), so I didn't die. I guess I'm still needed here. Not only did I not die, but I

was flown by helicopter straight into heart surgery, which left me with a beautiful giant scar and several wire loops in my sternum. I imagine they cut me up like a chicken with scissors and when they opened me up, my tits fell into my armpits.

In the post-op ward, we all had our own inflatable balloons to reduce the shaking in our chests when we cough or laugh. The pain was brutal.

In fact, that wasn't my only near-death experience: at 16, I attempted suicide with pills from our entire first aid kit. I'll never forget the gastric lavage; the nurse made me really enjoy it. My mum thought I was killing myself because of a boyfriend, but I felt miserable and terribly out of control.

Even the way I was born was not far from death. My mother got pregnant at the age of 20 while at university. She wanted to have an abortion, and the abortion committee even gave her permission. But in the end, she decided not to abort. It must have been a terribly difficult decision and I'm very glad I never had to make it myself.

Before I had Lev, I had a silent miscarriage. I ended up in the hospital for curettage and it was one of the most difficult and painful experiences I have ever had. Hopefully, I'll get over it soon.

When you're friends with life and death, you can't help but be cheerful. The sources of my optimism are really deep.

Just like feminism. Which, for me, is a fundamental, essential position where my feelings and way of thinking are rooted. It's in my heart, in my body, in my skin. Sometimes something moves me so much that it has to be written on my skin. It's just as important and beautiful as the scars, stretch marks, and other marks that life itself has given me. Life brings lightning, #nigdyniebedzieszszlasama. Tattooed lightnings meet stretch marks and decorate my beautiful big belly. Or this tattoo of an earth lover means love for the planet. The tattoos are the traces of the life I can control, but I love them just as much as the traces I can't.

This is all of me, and it's wonderful.