



**I HATE TELLING YOU
HOW I REALLY
FEEL**

**NIKKI
WALLSCHLAEGER**

I SHARED MY PAIN WITH YOU

because I thought you were a friend
(you wanted me to validate you as
one of the good guys) **I SHARED MY**

PAIN WITH YOU because I thought
you were my mother (I've watched
you destroy yourself for decades)

I SHARED MY PAIN WITH YOU

because you were supposed to be
my father (when we we first met you
were preoccupied with showboating)

WE SHARE OUR PAIN WITH YOU

because we're supposed to be sisters
(white feminism) **I SHARED MY PAIN**

because you are my grandmother (the
house of repression) **I SHARED PAIN**

WITH YOU because you were my
grandfather (your father was lynched

when you were a child) **I SHARED
MY PAIN WITH YOU** because I

thought you were a teacher **I SHARED
MY PAIN WITH YOU** because

I thought you were a mentor (you
were not inspired you were stealing)

WE SHARE OUR PAIN WITH YOU

because we are part of the world (you kill us in thousands of ways daily).

**I HATE TELLING YOU HOW I
REALLY FEEL**

It's a risk I take when **YOU WON'T
BELIEVE ME**

**I HATE TELLING YOU
HOW I REALLY FEEL**

NIKKI WALLSCHLAEGER

A doll with short, vibrant red hair and a black, sleeveless top. The doll is positioned against a bright yellow background. The image is a meme with text overlaid on it.

**TIME IS THE LOWERING MEAT
CLEAVER OF THE WORLD**

**EVERY BLACK GIRL'S FIRST
WESTERN BOYFRIEND**

CONFUSED FRIENDSHIP



WITH COMPLIANCE

AGAIN



ALL THOSE SAD-BLOOM FACES

DRIPPING WITH BUNTING

A close-up photograph of a doll with short, vibrant red hair and bangs. The doll has a serious, somewhat melancholic expression, looking slightly to the left of the camera. She is wearing a bright red, textured sweater with a prominent white turtleneck collar. The background is a plain, light blue wall. The lighting is soft, casting a subtle shadow on the wall behind her.

I HAD A NICE TIME

SO WHY AM I ANXIOUS

A close-up photograph of a Barbie doll with bright red, short, layered hair. She has dark eyes and a neutral expression. She is wearing a strapless, form-fitting dress with a black and white pattern of irregular, interconnected shapes, resembling a honeycomb or cellular structure. The background is plain white.

DOES THIS DRESS

**MAKE ME LOOK LESS OF A
PERFECT VICTIM TO RALLY AROUND**

A close-up photograph of a doll with dark hair and large, dark eyes, lying on a vibrant red, textured blanket. The doll is positioned diagonally across the frame. In the background, a colorful patterned rug with yellow, red, and black designs is visible. The overall lighting is bright, highlighting the doll's features and the texture of the blanket.

THE THING IS WITH ALCOHOL

**YOU ARE NICER TO PEOPLE WHO
REALLY DON'T DESERVE IT**

**A CIRCLET OF MURDERED BOYS
MARCHING OVER YOUR HEAD**

**JUST LIKE THOSE '50s CARTOONS
WE WATCHED AS CHILDREN**





WISH YOU WERE A BEER

**INSTEAD OF A
COLORBLIND MANSPLAINER**



I USED TO WAIT ALL DAY

**FOR AN INVISIBLE PHONE CALL
FROM BOYS LIKE YOU**



I DO HAVE AN ABNORMAL

AMOUNT OF DREAMS



YOU'RE KILLIN ME BROET

A close-up photograph of a doll with vibrant red hair and large, dark eyes. The doll is wearing a shiny, silver, textured jacket. The background is filled with a stack of round, perforated crackers. The text is overlaid in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a black outline.

**READY TO ETERNALLY
TALK OVER YOU**

FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

**IT'S EASY TO LOVE SOMEONE
INCOMPREHENSIBLE**

**IT MEANS YOU NEVER
HAVE TO APOLOGIZE**



A close-up photograph of a doll with short, vibrant red hair and large, dark blue eyes. The doll is wearing a red, textured top. The background is a solid, bright green color. The lighting is soft, highlighting the doll's features.

**I HATE TELLING YOU
HOW I REALLY FEEL**



NORMAL CONVERSATION

FOR EVERYONE



**I WAKE TO SLEEP AND
TAKE MY WAKING SLOW**

**MUST BE NICE
TO HAVE THAT LUXURY**

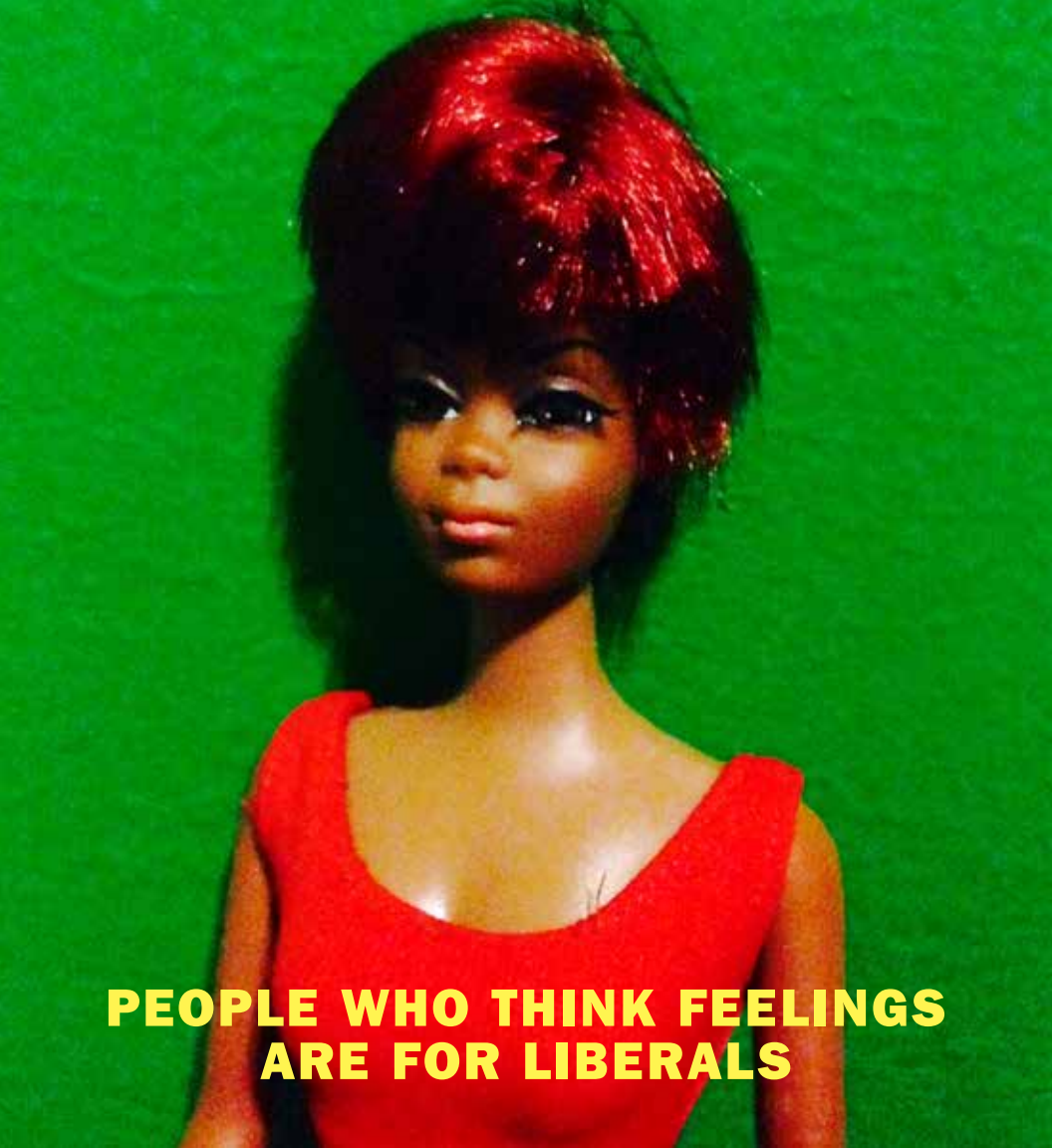
**THAT HOPE IS ANOTHER
BLOATED MOAT**

ARE YOU WORTH THE RINGWORM



OBLIGATIONS





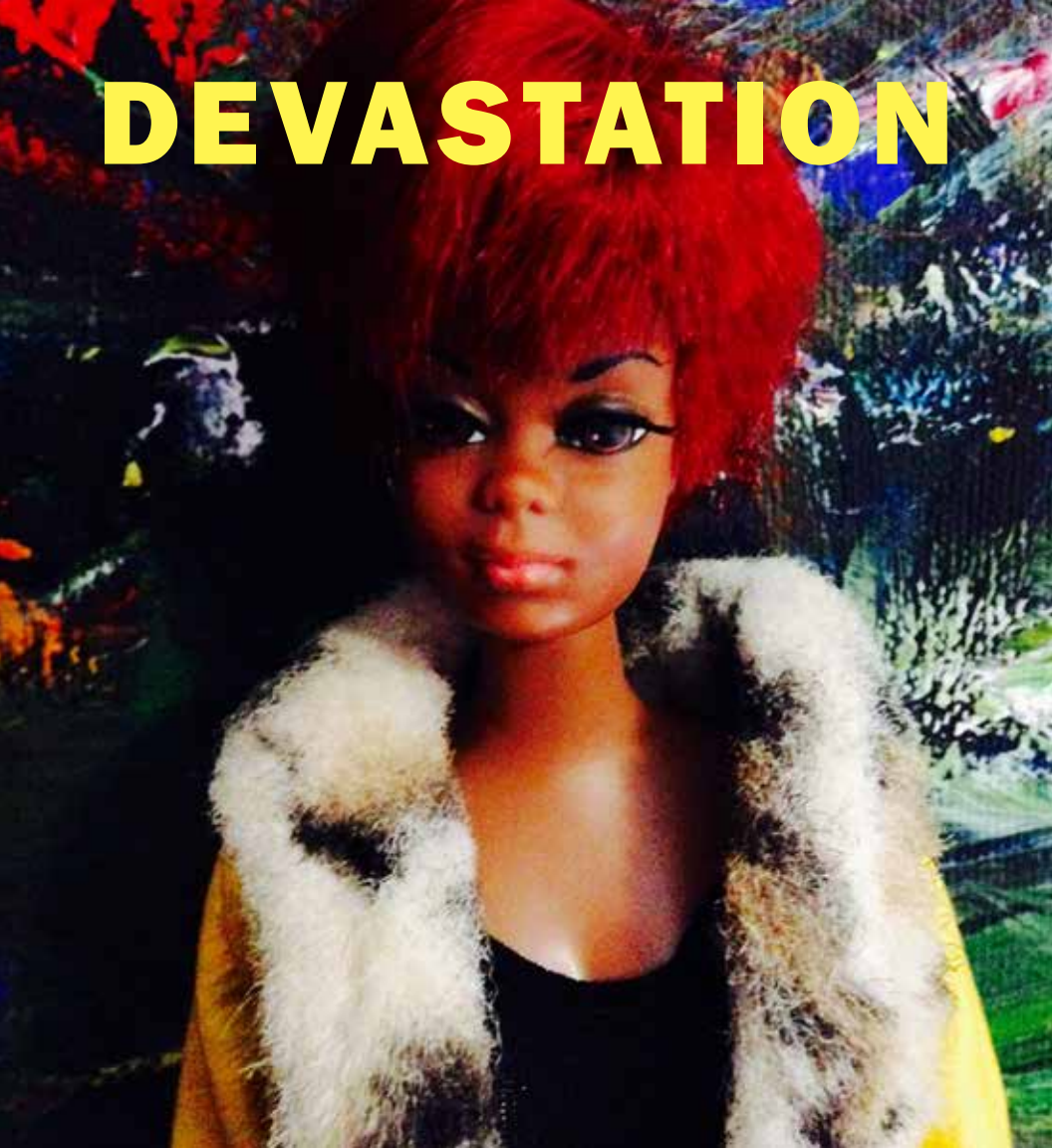
**PEOPLE WHO THINK FEELINGS
ARE FOR LIBERALS**



I AM USUALLY BETRAYED

**BY TEACHABLE MOMENTS
IN THE VALLEY**

DEVASTATION



A close-up photograph of a doll with short, vibrant red hair and dark eyes. The doll is wearing a white shirt with bold, diagonal stripes in red and blue. The background is a textured, bright pink wall. The lighting is soft, highlighting the doll's features.

WHAT ABOUT

EMOTIONAL POVERTY



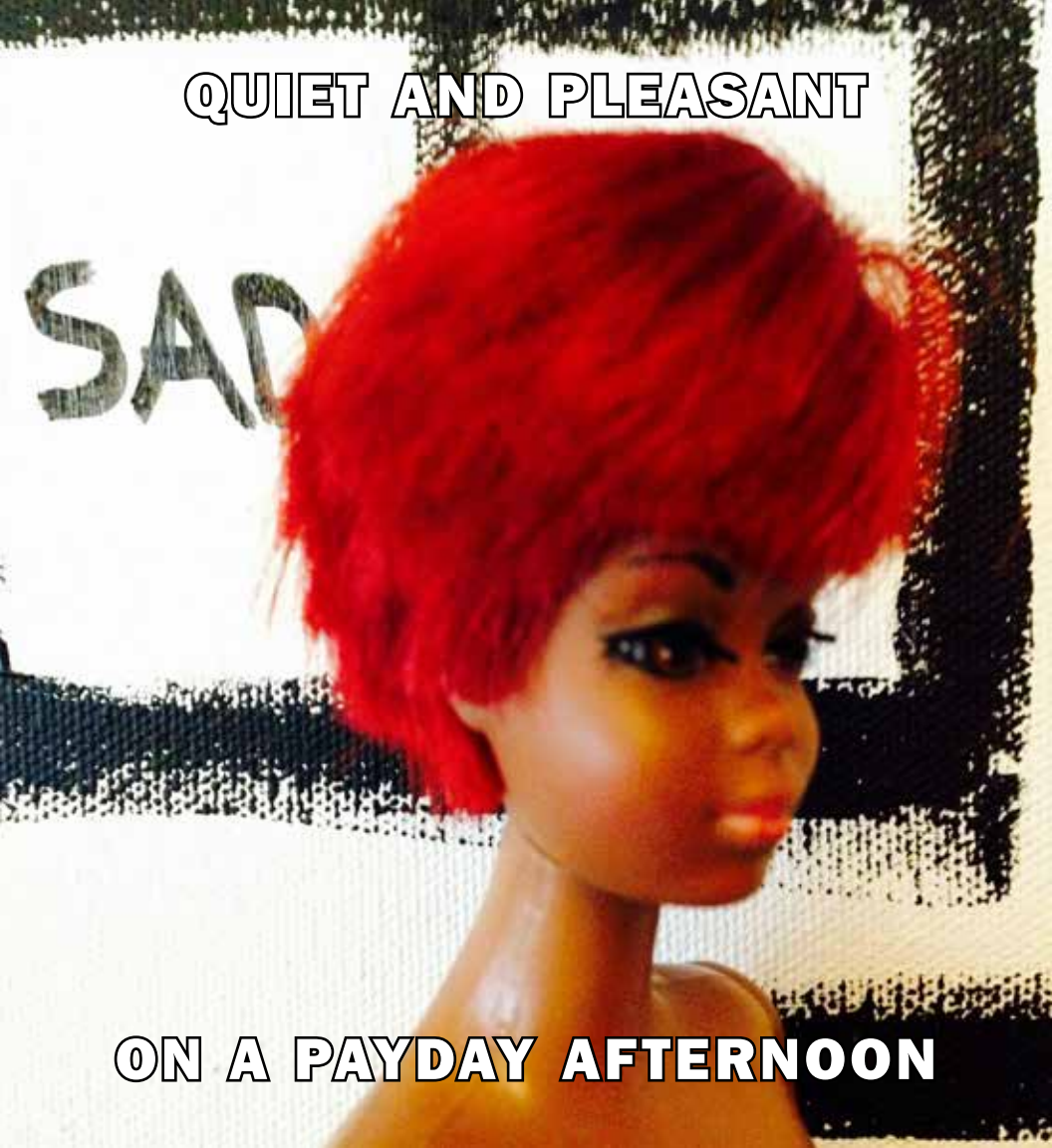
LIKE ALL GOOD HOUSE GIRLS

**I AM GROWING MANDIBLES
UNDER MY SHIFT**

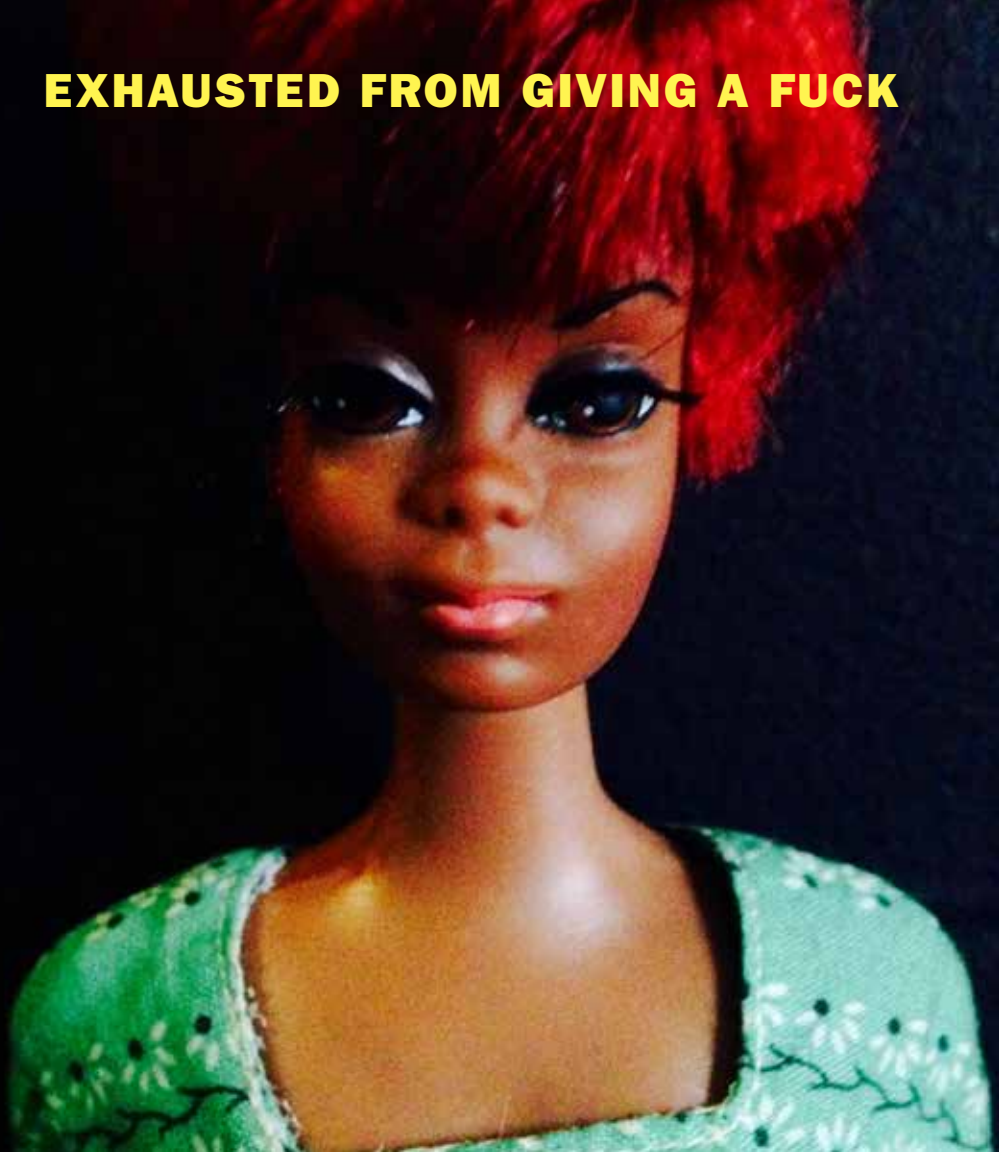
QUIET AND PLEASANT

SAD

ON A PAYDAY AFTERNOON



EXHAUSTED FROM GIVING A FUCK



Some of the lines from this project have appeared in the following publications as appendages inside of other poems, as part of a bigger body in progress called *Crawlspace*:

Time is the lowering meat cleaver of the world every black girl's first western boyfriend is from "Sonnet (40)" in *P-Queue 12*

All those sad-bloom faces dripping with bunting is from "Sonnet (12)" in *Dusie: Eco-poetics* guest-edited by Marthe Reed

The thing is with alcohol you are nicer to people who really don't deserve it is from "Sonnet (38)" forthcoming in the *Electric Gurlesque*

A circlet of murdered boys marching over your head just like those '50s cartoons we watched as children is from "Sonnet (28)" in *Elective Affinities*

I used to wait all day for an invisible phone call from boys like you is from "Sonnet (37)" *P-Queue 12*

It's easy to love someone incomprehensible it means you never have to apologize is from "Sonnet (34)" in the *Brooklyn Rail*

I am usually betrayed by teachable moments in the valley is from "Sonnet (28)" in *Elective Affinities*

Quiet and pleasant on a payday afternoon is from "Sonnet (8)" in the *Account*

Nikki Wallschlaeger is the author of *Houses* (Horse Less, 2015), and the chapbook *I Would Be the Happiest Bird* (Horse Less, 2014).

I Hate Telling You How I Really Feel is the fourth chapbook in the 2015 series from Bloof Books. Each chapbook in the series is released in a limited edition of numbered copies, followed by a digital release, and a year-end combination volume called *Bound*.

BLOOF BOOKS CHAPBOOK SERIES

Volume 3: Issue 4 (2015)
ISSN 2373-163X

This is the electronic version

**YOU NEVER KNOW
WHAT I'LL SAY NEXT**

