“Whale” by the Boston slam team

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUjf5Yu\_id4

Last relationship, my partner didn’t know

what to get me for my birthday.

Said he didn’t know what a girl my size

would cherish.

Last month, a girl arrogant in her ignorance

tried to gut my self-confidence.

Said she didn’t normally body-shame, but

even a whale couldn’t pull off a peplum dress.

When I was younger, my mother—a chemist—

mixed laxatives into my water.

Thought it’d make me move this bowel.

Like I could flush all my flab away.

When I was ten, I drank enough salt water

to birth a tsunami,

purged every meal I consumed,

to slim my blubber body model thin.

Once upon a time a captain drove a mast of a ship

into a whale

and a wedding was thrown after.

Moral: there’s always a celebration

after a fat death.

The slob is a cancer that needs to be killed.

When you’re bigger than a lot of people in the room

it’s easy to feel like a fish out of water.

All the space I take up

and still manage to feel like krill

I duct taped around my stomach,

made me a coral-reef noose.

I try to hang my body and make me

a pearl to be gawked at.

Girl calls me whale,

and I spit up that lint

Girl calls me whale,

and I break open her neck.

Girl calls me whale,

and I sit, and I stir, and I weigh the waves

that rip around me, rips me into a hidden cove

I should not be gutted, stripped, hunted.

What if I swallowed them like the whale did Jonah?

The whale that chewed off the leg like Moby Dick did the captain?

Seasoned on envy, a midnight snack

to ease the ache of breathing.

Fun fact! Whales don’t have teeth.

We have baleen bristles. Meaning:

we

do

not

waste

time

chewing insignificant plankton.

My tongue . . .

. . . and my throat

I'm made to feel I'm being picked apart.

I feasted on my fat. I’m exactly what I eat.

Girl calls me whale,

and I call myself Poseidon of every water that tried to drown me.

For a castle to rise from dry sand,

I built a throne on top of spite.

Girl calls me whale,

and I swallow her sight.

Girl calls me the largest mammal to have ever lived,

and I say,

thank you for this space,

for the pulse of a Black woman that can be heard two miles away,

for a heart big enough to sink an ocean bay.