

DEBORAH ANN HERZOG • TRANSPARENT

My daily prayer in high school was,
“Dear God, please make me
invisible today.”

I pushed my way through the coffin halls
reached for the door knob slick as ice
that stood between me and Mr. Wells
felt the dried pyramids of gum
on the underside of the wobbly desktop
slid into the chair that held me against my will
fifty minutes of torture in the green room every day
I obsessed over the face of anonymity, and
hated those jocks trimmed in school colors
the games they played
“Bobby Jones is a monkey today”
no, I wasn’t giving them a chance to mock me
always did my homework, and
carried a pile of books on my hip
couldn’t stop my pounding heart
when Mr. Wells peered over those wire-rimmed glasses
with those gray stone eyes
so I slouched a lot and learned to block his view
by holding my chin in a sweaty palm
clicking my ball point pen in steady rhythm, as
I drew my brows together and
practiced that thoughtful look, while
thumbing through my biology book
like I was looking up the answer, but

I was happiest when the bell announced
I had made it, anonymously
through

•