

“Disguises”

Over the years I have gathered
a collection of disguises.
My closet looms full of possibilities.
Who would I like to be today?
Which mask best suits my mood?
I choose precisely the outfits
to hide my uncertainty, the
proper armor to shield my ego
from doubt or inadequacy.
I wait for my armoire
to swallow me whole,
the day when all of
the fear disappears.

For now, I'll conceal my
emotions in a stride,
in a nice pair of jeans,
a button down and brimmed hat,
a style slick with ease,
so your insults slip
and fall off my skin,
never giving them the
chance to sink or burrow in
or to dig at my confidence.

Other days I wish
I could hide in my closet.
Breathe in the fabrics and
avoid sunlight at all costs.

Pull up my hoodie like
Dracula protects his
fair skin with a cape,
only difference is
I have no cape to pretend
I have superpowers.
Only the clothing
I bought in bouts
of self-conscious
thoughts and doubts
about my worth.
If I add up the dollar
amounts I have spent
would it rival the counts
I have kept for myself?
Is this all that I'm worth?
The clothes on my back,
the ink in my skin,
the cut of my hair,
the shoes that keep me grounded?

I'm grounding myself in the
mirror, naked, trying
to make peace with the
body I've been given.

“Goldfish”

Some days I feel
I am spiraling.
Like a goldfish
in a toilet bowl,
swimming against
gravity, being
sucked outward
into space, erased
within a single flush.

Other days, I feel
the pull as a force
of realignment,
as finding my true
purpose, a path
among the porcelain.

Most days, I am dizzy,
and try to find the
strength to stand
as the world spins
around me, until I
tumble into a
seated position and
breathe, the only
way I know how.

“Honing in”

Honing in
sounds a lot like
coming home.

Coming back to
the notion that
home needn't
have four walls
and a roof.

The truth is that
after some time
one will realize
that honing in can
happen from anywhere,
that coming home
is a state of mind,
that waking up
can be done with
eyes closed.

“Shine”

Waking up next to you
is like awaking to the
rising sun. The early
morning light and
warmth pouring in
through my window blinds.
I open my eyes and there you are.
These days, I know
you are tired, dreading
the effort needed to
rise up, and bring the
light you have to those
who depend on it.

I know you have had
trouble seeing the light
you hold deep within you
and how it shines
regardless of your mood.

And yet.

I can't deny that I've seen
your skies grow hazy as of recent.
Storm clouds weigh heavy
on the horizons in your eyes.
And while I never want you
to tamp down your hurricane
of emotions,

I do want you to never
forget what it feels like
to shine.

I've seen you at your
most radiant and it is like
fireworks and lightning,
like shooting stars and
full moons illuminating
the darkness, like the
solar eclipse that was
so bright if you stared
at it, it would damage
your eyes.

But I don't want to look away.
Because your love, and happiness,
are worth going blind.

“Senses”

I often think to myself,
alone at night, watching
stars twinkle independent
of each other, that I can
only know the world
through my own senses.

I see the way the tree branches
dance in the wind,
and hear the notes of birdsong
travel along the breeze
as unique and distinct, against
the backdrop of
radiant blue, oceans of sky
lying overhead,
swallowing all in its tides
like breath.

I'm at a loss for words
to describe its breadth,
or the fear I feel
in the brevity of life
whenever I choose
to contemplate death.
I know I am not alone in this.

So I write for connection,
using words like bricks
that I lay into sentence,

building a bridge
to traverse comprehension.
I'm reaching out to you
from the depths.