

15 TO 30

I don't want to find my naked body in a sea of bushes
covered by a stranger's leopard fleece blanket in the backside alley of an off-strip casino at sunrise
I don't want to sob loudly, uncontrollably, about my sorrows in public places
I don't want my stomach pumped
To pass out and urinate all over myself in front of my peers before making it into the first bar
I don't want to sprint down a hill in heels only to pass out and skid on my face for six feet
I don't want to wake up and try to forget for the rest of my life that there's a video out there
Of some people doing something to me
That I only remember feeling like I never want to remember
I don't want to emotionally abuse my partners with anger that isn't meant for them
I don't want to drive with one eye closed to trick the double vision
I don't want to blow a .267
I don't want to wake up drenched in unfixable shame

All of these mentally bloody memories
never again
because I drank and drank and sank my sadness and broken spirit away
The destruction of a lifetime of a neglected mental illness
So I say "no thank you, because of my meds"
But it was just a really good reason to convince my own head
That the bottle I fill inside of me cannot be fixed by emptying one
Going numb
Making everything feel worse
Then the pain already brewing inside

SELF-HARM

The first time I tried I kill myself I thought I needed to end the beating

Of my heart and the thoughts in my head

I was a failure and there was no life line

Nothing being provided but toxic positivity

The failure I was failed

Thankfully

It made a mess

Bulldozed a family

My intention was radically far from wanting to hurt anybody

So perhaps that guilt has since saved me

I found other ways to kill me

Smoking, drinking, body destruction

Ghosting entire lives

Whole humanities

As a way to retreat

From the internal pain suffocating me

It still felt like a failure

But now of my human being survival abilities

I have believed it was allowed to be

More than an incurable disease that suffered me

it is my personality

My threshold of ability

My worth in society

Where symptoms can be healed if I just smile

Learn to appreciate

And take a long bath every once in a while

That's the internalized thinking

Pinning a badge of failure directly to my bare chest

When I would relapse into depression

I would tread and try

Buy my smiles made my soul slither away

My appreciation bullied my self sympathy into smithereens

And the best I could do for a bath is sit on the shower floor until the burning water turned frigid and shocked my system back into make believe mode to stop being so "lazy"

My poor mind, brain, soul and body

Being abused all these years by myself every time my illness flares up

Measuring my human success by how long I can go

Without the cycle reminding me

Of how much of a failure I wouldn't be

If my smile was strong enough to heal

I named my mental illness "the monster" through my failure tears

Saw needing to add therapy sessions as a setback

Upping my dosage has always meant

That the failure monster will always outrun me

Having to turn my chips in every time

Take away all the successful healthy days

While I mourned and abused myself

Back to finding hope that this would be the last time

I practice my smile in the mirror

Recount the sugar I ate that made me feel this way

Think about the black community

Abandoned LGBTQ

All the ways I have hurt

And it disappears my need for validation and sympathy

Why me

Before every single other human has been pain free

I grew up rich

Traveled to infinity

Had food to eat

and a house cleaned by a cleaning lady

We basically weren't beat

Had safe cars that were fancy

My parents pay for my therapy

Shame on me

For having a single emotional need

Training a broken brain to see success in the repeat

Leading my synapses to swim upstream

Finding a pocket of society that lives with internalized stigma free radical thinking

These are the success' I want my future to see

That will heal me

To be mentally ill and also healthy

CONVERSION THERAPY

The dissection of the infinitesimal

That lives in the cells of your soul

With a human being that has dedicated their life to supporting you through the mental surgery

Is deeply freeing

You redirect your internal energy to flow with your present sense

Instead of treading water

Against the current

The now

Suddenly

You have extra charge to put into living

Breathing

Healing

By talking to this support human

You can go to places

That society

Doesn't save space for

That you don't make time for

That the body

Is too afraid to face

By opening up

You can close internal doors

That squeek

That swing open violently with the slightest wind

That are even jammed closed

These mental surgery support humans

Don't just listen

They hear

They don't just validate

They hold the mirror

Pivoting it to catch the rays of light

As you speak

Reflecting

Refracting

Co-leading the conversion of toxic trapped memory energy

From your depths

To the surface

Evaporating into the breath

At times condensing to tears

Finding its way to an irrelevant anechoic chamber

To reverberate peacefully

Like a tornado twisting inside a soda bottle

Instead of feasting on land