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# **The Epic Poem of Not Being Enough**

**The story of a girl who lost herself, only to find  
that she hadn't gotten lost; she simply misplaced  
her importance.**

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*~Not Enough~*

“Am I enough?”  
 I blurt out, not knowing  
 How else to ask the question  
 Without seeming desperate,  
 Because in all honesty.  
 I am.  
 Desperate, that is.  
 I am in a dark place,  
 Where everything seems to be  
 Dulled  
 And the one thing  
 That has been magnified is this pain,  
 This fear of not being enough.

Mom looks at Dad  
 And they both roll their eyes.  
 “What kind of a question is that?”  
 They ask,  
 Not realizing the error they have made  
 In answering the question that way.  
 My eyes are filling with  
 Unshed tears and I ask again,  
 “Am I enough?”  
 They laugh at some private joke  
 I’m not in on  
 And take a moment before answering,  
 “Of course you are. Who said you weren’t enough?”

*I did*  
 I say to myself  
 But I look at them  
 And get up to leave the room,  
 “No one. I just needed to know.”  
 As I walk down the hall,  
 I can hear them talking about me,  
 “‘Am I enough?’ she asks.  
 Why would she even ask a question like that?  
 What does...” their voices fade  
 Because I start walk faster,  
 Away from their words that have started to  
 Sink into me,  
 And I shut myself in my room,  
 To shed the tears that I had kept in  
 while asking this question.

The question isn’t rhetorical;

I am serious.  
 If only they had gotten the hint  
 That I really wanted an answer,  
 Instead this feeling of being volatile  
 And getting an invisible punch to the stomach  
 As they laughed while I was standing there,  
 Starting to feel stupid about my insecurity.  
 I feel so small; not even close to being enough.

I sit in the middle of my bed,  
 Trying to nurse the wounds they have put in my soul,  
 Their careless words showing yet another example of  
 Why I am not enough.  
*They didn't get what I was trying to ask*  
 I tell myself,  
*Maybe I was just expecting a different reaction.*  
*Maybe I'm the one who's overreacting.*  
*This isn't working.*  
 I sob until my throat feels dry.  
 After that, I close my puffy red eyes.  
 My tear-stained cheeks dry  
 As I fall into a restless sleep.

*~A day between here and there~*

It's getting late and I'm getting restless;  
 I've spent too much time with my sisters today.  
 I just want to go home,  
 But everyone else decides we should go  
 To Denny's for a late night snack.  
 I'm with my sisters  
 -One older and two younger,-  
 And my older sister's husband.

Being second oldest and having a reputation  
 For not being the best sport is what sets the scene that occurs.  
 "I don't want anything," I grumble, sagging into the bench.  
 Apparently I've had a bad attitude all day today  
 And my sister snaps,  
 "What have you gone through  
 That makes you think  
 You can be angry and rude to everyone all the time?  
 You're always getting into fights  
 With Mom and Dad  
 And you can't get along with anyone.  
**What's wrong with you?"**

As I move out of the booth,  
 I feel the stitches in my wounds start to tear,

Snagging on the breath now caught in my throat.  
 "Nothing," I try to say, but my voice comes out small.  
 My hands will not stay still  
 As five more words manage to escape my mouth,  
 "Nothing is wrong with me."  
 Then I'm walking into the restaurant's bathroom  
 And into a stall  
 Where I sit and try to compose myself;  
 I can feel the tears that are close to falling down my face,  
 But I dab at my eyes with the scratchy toilet paper,  
 Swiping my face with my finger tips  
 At the tears that have managed to slip down my cheeks.  
 I'm counting as I breathe slowly in and out,  
 Because I feel like I can't breathe at all  
 And I was told that counting while breathing slowly  
 Helps calm you down.

*This is not okay.*

*I am not okay.*

I know it, I just do.

She doesn't have the right

To say any of those things,

But I don't have the right to be angry

Because she won't understand.

She can't-because there is no empathy from her

To console me and what I went through

And I am *still* going through.

She won't understand

Because she doesn't *want* to understand.

I can't tell her, I can't tell anyone

-The last time I opened up,

That person left,

And left me with only one lingering thought,

*I am not enough.*

*~A few months later~*

I don't know how to explain to my therapist

That I'm not here because my cousin

Sexually abused me;

She did

-A few years back,-

But I've already made peace with that.

I just needed a 'legitimate' reason

To see a therapist,

And those reasons couldn't be a mental diagnosis,

At least by my parents' standards.

They simply don't tolerate emotional problems,

Only physical problems,

Like abuse.  
 She asks me a lot of invasive questions  
 About the incidents with my cousin and almost as an afterthought,  
 With Mom in the room,  
 She asks me if I want Mom to be present in my sessions or leave the room.  
 I can't really say that I want her to leave;  
 She's sitting right next to me, expecting me to let her stay.

Instead of saying what I really feel, I tell the therapist,  
 "No, it's alright. She can stay."  
 But to myself I think  
*Of course I want her to leave.*  
*She's one of the reasons I asked to come and see a therapist.*  
*I can't talk to you about her*  
*When she's **here** and why did you even ask me that question*  
*While she's sitting beside me?*  
*I thought you were supposed to be the analyzer.*  
*Can you not see how uncomfortable you are making me?*

She asks me more invasive questions  
 And I can't answer them all truthfully  
 Because Mom is still sitting in the chair next to me,  
 Trying to figure out what I'm saying,  
 Like she's a therapist too.  
 It's all I can do to sit there and half answer these questions  
 That have now become pointless  
 Because I'm not even fully answering them.  
*This isn't worth it.*  
*I'm not going to get anywhere with this*  
*Because we're talking about the wrong problem.*  
*How am I going to fix this if I can't even talk about it?*

Finally, it's over, but it didn't help a thing.  
 It won't either,  
 Because Mom will still be sitting there next to me,  
 In *all* of these sessions,  
 Driving me insane afterward,  
 Trying to get me to open up on the car ride home.  
 It just makes me mad  
 -I don't *want* to open up to her.  
 At least, not now.

*~An average day a year after the failed therapy sessions~*

I wake up,  
 Disappointed to have done so.  
 I don't want to get out of bed, but I have to.  
 I wait as long as I can to get out of bed  
 And the cold of my concrete floor jolts my tired nerves awake

As I get up to face the day.  
 I dress, brush my hair and teeth and I'm out the door,  
 Headphones in and volume on high  
 The whole way to school.  
 School is a drag and it takes all my energy  
 To pretend like I am happy and doing well.  
 It's just a show for my friends-  
 I don't want them to know how bad it's gotten again.  
 It's not like they'd really notice;  
 I'm just the wallflower of the group  
 -The observer-  
 And occasionally  
 I'll say something worth a response from one of them.  
 I don't want to pretend, but it's all I have left.  
 I get home and shut myself in my room,  
 Exhausted from the day;  
 It isn't even halfway over.  
 That's okay though,  
 I'll just sleep.  
 No one notices anyway.

I wake up in the middle of the night,  
 My lights still on and nothing has gotten done.  
 I don't care.  
 I go back to sleep,  
 Where I'm okay,  
 Where I can hide from my life in the form of vivid dreams,  
 Instead of my reality-  
 Devoid of color and meaninglessly empty.  
 If there had been any engagement with my family today,  
 It would have been slightly hostile.  
 I am cold towards them and they have just accepted that it's my norm.  
 It kills me a little bit inside that I have disappeared so much  
 To the people who should see me the most.  
 I'm not gone-  
 I just don't know how to say anything right  
 Without provoking some sort of fight.  
 I guess I am just not enough.

*~Sophomore year~*

I don't know what I'm doing.  
 I can't communicate anything I want to.  
 High School is not what everyone said it would be.  
 In fact, it sucks.  
*It's better than junior high* they said.  
*You'll love it,* they said.  
 Well, they lied.

Maybe they meant if you didn't mind being stereotyped  
 Into the groups that come with high school:  
 The Intellectual Nerds,  
 The Sports Stars,  
 The Popular Preppies,  
 The Delinquent Druggies,  
 The Drama Dorks,  
 The Social Outcasts,  
 All of the main classic cliques.

Anyone who doesn't really fit into those groups  
 Are clustered smaller groups  
 Or are grouped into a more general group  
 That I have affectionately deemed  
 The Nobodies.

I have been lumped in with this group.  
 Not that I necessarily mind being grouped here,  
 Because I think that this social anomaly is a bunch of trash.  
 It's just designed to build barriers against the groups,  
 Preventing us from really socializing  
 With those not of our socially deemed groups.  
 I am part of a "group,"  
 But I feel alone,  
 Though I am surrounded on all sides by people.

*~Enough.~*

It's taken me nearly four years to figure this out,  
 But what I figured out was this;  
 Sometimes there isn't going to be someone to help you.  
 Sometimes you're going to be on your own  
 And the only person that will be there to help you  
 Is your reflection staring back at you in the mirror.

When I finally realized this,  
 My reflection was something I'd never dreamed of becoming;  
 A self-loathing,  
 Angry,  
 Sad,  
 Broken girl,  
 Trapped in a reflection  
 That she was terrified of seeing.  
 I can't explain the feeling I had when I saw that  
 I had become something that I never wanted to be.

It was then,  
 When I saw how small and insignificant

I had let myself become,  
That I realized that I needed to do something,  
Because I'd fast-tracked myself to self-destruction  
And no one could slow me down except for me.  
I had to.  
Because that's what it really boiled down to;  
I realized that I was in charge of pulling myself together  
Because the life that I was holding in my hands  
Was my own.  
I had realized how broken I was  
And saw that I needed to be healed.

So that's what happened.  
I picked myself up off the ground,  
Stitched up the wounds from others and myself  
With words of others  
And then  
I began to write.  
My fingers started to get a little stiff,  
Not from the feeling of disuse  
But because I used them so much.  
That is the difference between then to now;  
Instead of reaffirming that  
I was not enough, not worth being loved,  
I told myself that I was enough,  
That I was worth being loved;  
That's what changed.

I told myself these things  
By writing what I wished other people had told me  
When I needed it.  
Finding my voice when I thought I had none  
Was a very important step in this fight  
To come back from the colorless world  
I had trapped myself in.  
Now I know that I don't need anyone  
But myself  
To feel of worth.

Even though there are still times  
Where my doubts manage to make me feel  
Like I do not measure up to what I think I should be,  
I know in the deepest reaches of my soul  
A resonation of one thing that will always  
Be true and constant:  
The knowledge that  
I  
Am  
Enough.