

## 5. Life Lessons

I lost my faith a long time ago, but I felt so hopeless I decided to try buying a can opener from the dollar store just to see what would happen.

The can opener broke instead of the can, and I couldn't stop thinking isn't that a life lesson.

Nobody's life is together but some people have better problems than me.

I twisted my emotions until no one could stand me.

This is no triumphant homecoming.

I'm not looking for epiphanies.

I had a dream where I only remember the emotions I was experiencing.

I was scared of something that I couldn't stop from happening, even though someone told me it didn't have to be.

And my mother was distracted and talking on the phone as she rushed out of the room before I could explain.

And I woke up before my final chance to prove I could change took place.

It really does something to you when experiencing life is equated with pain.

I know the paths in the shadows like the back of my hand.

I get burnt by the light.

But I can't stand the fact that I'm a ghost in my own life.

I wish positivity was a bigger life experience than it's been.

I wish its impact was stronger than the negativity coursing through me instead.

If I'm going to keep drowning it should bring me some life lessons for a change.

I could try changing directions instead of just hoping that this world will change.

I bought a can opener that's stronger because the cans aren't getting any weaker.

I break the cans open every time and every time it's a lesson learned for the better.

The light might hurt but maybe that's good for me.

If I stop feeling anything I wouldn't be alive for the good bad and ugly.

I'm collecting the courage to see the full spectrum of everything.

Smiling for the selfie even though I can't stand how I see me.

For a change it's self-discovery instead of hiding in my own way.

It's time to let the sun shine on every street of my city.

No more shadows hiding cloaks and daggers.

Let me be free to find out what matters.

No more prison sentences.

I only have time for life lessons.

#### 4. Glass Shards

I didn't know I was lonely.  
I just woke up one day  
And felt the years of no one touching me.

I kept them tucked in my rib cage.  
I heard it in the echoes of my shoulders' aches.  
I could read every line painted across my face.

Play it backwards.  
Glass shards  
Combine into a mirror.

Now you see me smile.  
I want you to taste my denial.  
Your simplicity feels so mild.

I always want what I can't have.  
It leaves me helpless and hopeless  
But safe in my own embrace.

I don't know what to do with happiness.  
I don't know how to feel present in the moments.  
I keep them in my bones for safekeeping.

Burning alive feels wonderful until you're a cold ash pile.  
So instead I live by filling up inside.  
I thought I was going so far until I got stuck in overdrive.

When it gets hard I always let people I love leave me behind.  
So I'm trying to turn around and change my mind.  
I decided to stay but I don't know why.

There's a broken mirror on the ground.  
A million versions of me stare back and frown.  
But there's nothing if I turn around.

I'm following the broken lines.  
The future they may lead to is worth a try.  
The one where maybe I love myself too much to care if I'm lonely all the time.

### **3. Make Me Alone**

You're the wind beneath the waves, and the sand below my feet.

You aggravate every soft part of me.

Make me alone, alone, alone.

Make me willing to be alone.

I try to leave, but you're a shell and I'm a snail.

I can't face the world when I'm so naked and frail.

Without you, what can I be?

This fear frightens every hardened part of me.

Make me alone, alone, alone.

Make me stand to be alone.

I carve a hole, feel rays of warmth and cool moonbeams.

I try to count the stars, and see they outnumber you and me.

Why am I afraid to subtract you when these pools of shining light multiply every part of me?

I am alone, alone, alone.

I can finally be alone.

## **2. Why**

Why the fuck can't I find the will to stay alive on my own.

I know I don't want Mom to cry, and I know I love my friends to death.

But if they all went away, what would stop me?

They say more people love me than I know.

But am I one of them?

## 1. Half-formed

I look around the room of my youth.  
“My Growing Years” and “Sweet 16” to the right.  
“Dream” and “Laugh” and “Breathe” to the left.  
“Dance with your heart” at my back.

Audrey Hepburn stands straight ahead, eyes coolly darting away towards magenta flowers and pale blank walls.  
Her little black dress and glittering diamonds beckon the way forward.

I grew from adolescent to adult between the walls of this room, fueled by sweet dreams intermingled with bitter thoughts.

In this room I learned to laugh breathily into a phone, eyes darting quickly towards the zebra-print rug as my heart danced and cheeks flushed pink like a “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” poster. My words would cling to the back of my throat, coming out half-formed through strangled breath.

Audrey stared away coolly, towards magenta flowers and pale blank walls.  
Her little black dress and glittering diamonds beckoned me forward.