

Everything There Is

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The Fury of Silence

It's almost a different life, my own memories.
Clinging to the edges of my current self,
Like gum pulling itself from the pavement
To live under your shoes and have you pause,
Every now and then,
To scrape them away.

Except

Memories cannot be scraped away,
Not these, anyway.
You can forget memorized formulas
From your high school classes
Like the way the waves erase
Sculptures built on sands.
But not these.

Your arms ache when people raise their voices.
You flinch when someone raises their hand
To say hello.

Hello.

A sign of greeting that has marked you
With flickers of faint memories
From times your skin was marked

Red.

Like islands with beads of the red seas,
Carved into your skin.
Things are different now, you know this.
But your memories remain,
And they haunt you
With no regard for time
Or place.
They've built a home in you, and you in them.

You are roommates with your pain.

There is fury in silence,

Fury in remembering everything
And not being able to do anything
About everything.

There is fury in knowing
And in wondering
If you could have been happier

Without

these memories.

They were not obstacles,
Nor were they trials,
A higher being did not give them to you
As a test of your will and your strength.

They were just pain.
And you bear them still,
In stilled silence
And silent stillness.

You are me.
But I am no longer you.

If I Live On

There's a countdown going on somewhere.
I have my back turned to it, so I don't know
Just how many more beats I have before I

Fall.

The numbers tick. They click. They scream.
One, two, three, four.
I could just turn around to see.
Five, six, seven.
But what is there to live for if I know when it ends?
Eight, nine.
So I keep looking forward, I keep my eyes straight.
Ten.

I keep my breath steady while my thoughts
R

U

N

From me.

There are a lot of questions in life,
Ten.
But I really only want reassurance...
Nine, eight.
That whatever it may be this is counting towards...
Seven, six, five.
I'll be able to say, in the end.
Four, three, two, one.
That I lived. Truly lived.

And that I was loved more than I loved myself.

Where the Water Ebbs

Happiness is mysterious.
It is elusive and quiet.
Or at least, that's what it is to me.

It is the sound of water in a dark room,
The droplets disturbing the still seas,
Creating ripples I cannot see.

It is cold to the touch
But only because it is the brightest of flames
And I am unable to fathom it.

Happiness.

It slips between my fingers
No matter how hard I try to close the gaps.
It finds creases to slip into and out of
Until all I have is a little pond
Right at the center of my palm.

Sometimes, it is enough.

But other times, I find myself wishing,
Hoping,
Praying,

That I had a bucket.

Or that I had light

So I could see
just where the fountain is,
Where the faucet is,
Where the droplets come from,
Where the seas lead to,

Where the water ebbs.

Weeping Dreams

Have you ever woken up a sobbing mess?
Uncontrollable tears, inconsolable sadness?

Have you ever woken up from a dream so sad
Yet without recollection of what made it so?

It is my belief that we all have a container within us.
Some of us are capable of holding more. Keeping more.
Some of us have cracks in our cases, tears slip through,
And we cry.

And some of us don't have lids.

We wait until its contents rise, and until it

S

P

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L

L

S

Out.

And such is the case, sometimes, when we wake up,
Without knowing why we're even crying
For something we can't recall.

So, take this, a reminder, of sorts:

Empty your glass, before it empties you.

Asphalt Roots

Cracks in the pavement
Where something sprouts out
In search of sunlight
And rainfall
And whatever else it needs to survive

Concrete is no match for nature's will
No matter how much you pour onto the earth
One way or another
These roots we choose to hide
Will rise and let itself be known

I wish I too, was strong

I wish I had the strength to push through
Whatever this is that hangs above me
I wish I could find it in myself
To push until I meet the sun
And until the rain showers me

I wish I was strong enough
To survive

All Try Or Err

Today is a new day.
So is tomorrow.
There is a routine,
There is a pattern.

You wake up,
You go on your day,
And you sleep.
And again, and again.

And again.

You might wonder, sometimes,
Like I do,
“Just how long do I do this?
Up to what point?
What am I waking towards?”

And if I may be honest,
—not that I’ve been anything but,

I do not know.
I wish I did.

We wake up, always hoping
We might find out
Our purpose.

I think there are major purposes
And minor purposes.

Sometimes all people need is one
Small
Tiny
Seemingly insignificant
Sign to stay,
Wanting to wake.

A minor, minor purpose.

Take this as that.
Take this little snippet of my life

As I write this down,
Trying to convince myself to wake
To see tomorrow
As a sign
For your waking.

You make a difference,
It may seem small,
But sometimes, we need that.

We need the small,
Tiny
Seemingly insignificant
Sign.

Try to be that sign for someone.
Even if that someone
Is you.

Undiagnosed, Untrue

I want a name.
I want a name for whatever this is.
How does one win a war
When they don't even know
Who they're fighting?

The way I've lived
For two decades
Feels like I'm covered
In papercuts and micro-scratches
That no one else can see

And that I am

Submerged

In saltwater
Made from my own tears.

Despite how this feels,
Despite how heavy my feet feel
As I drag them along,
Strangers will tell me
You cannot give this a name.

I have to pay to get the name
Of whatever this is that plagues me,
Just the name,
Not the cure.

Never the cure.

I have to pay
As if I haven't paid
With two decades
Of my life.

And yet, still,
I want its name.

It Is With A Heavy Heart...

That I submit my resignation.
Consider this my two weeks' notice,
As I refuse to be held and emptied
By these jagged claws
You claim to be "adulthood".

It is a difference in opinion,
For you believe adulthood to be
Something so cruel.
On a terrain in which only a select few
Could ever journey across.

I resign from this belief of yours,
And all that are similar.
I simply do not see the world
As you do.
I do not have your sadness.

Make no mistake,
I do have my own sorrow,
But it is one I have not mistaken
For a false reality, a false narrative,
Crafted by years and years of tortured humanity.

If you claim that I am a child,
Or that I am childish,
Because I refuse to accept
That to live I must chase after money,
Then so be it.

I am a child.
Compared to the age of the universe,
I am nothing.
But I know that for me to live,
I must chase after life.

Gathering Kindling

Everyday I wake up and I take little sticks of happiness.
They're everywhere, if you try to look for them.
And I gather these up, building them into a nest,
For the future, so that I may rest.
But, sometimes, rain falls
The wind picks up
And my pile is swept a

way.

So I try again.
And again. And again.
And again.

At some point I forget
That I'm building a nest
And I become cold and unfeeling
So I turn it to kindling.
I light it with fire,
I hold my hands out.
I let the warmth spread.

It burns for a while, and the cold melts away,
Until the fire dies down, the sticks turn to ashes,
And I leave, to gather more kindling again.

And again.
And again.

Don't Forget to Smile :)

It's easier, isn't it?
It's easier to say "I'm fine"
Or to repeatedly reassure people
That you're okay.

It's easier than having to explain
Over and over again
Why you're not.
Most especially if you don't even know

Why?

A question you've asked so many times.
Why, indeed?

Why am I sad?
Why can't I just be happier?

And some people will say that
"You just have to try."

As if you haven't spent your whole life
Trying.

As if they don't see that everyday,
If you show yourself
Or let yourself be known,
That it is you already succeeding.

So it's better, so much better,
To just lie and say "I'm fine".
To hope that maybe
If you say it enough,
(Like a wish or a prayer)

It'll come true.

So go on, say it.
And don't forget to smile.

I want you to know...

That I love you.
That you are so worthy of love.
That you, like the stars,
Give me something to look up to
And smile at.

I need you to know...
That your value is not measured
By the things you worry about,
Instead, it is measured by the smiles
You have given people.

I just wish that you knew...
You are so important.
No matter what anyone says,
No matter what your own voice says,
You are here, regardless of reasoning,
You are here, you exist,
And rightly so.

You deserve to live,
You deserve to love,
And to be loved.

You deserve so much more
Than what you've been made to believe.
So keep living,
if not for you, then for me.

- A letter from Me to Myself, should you need a reminder.

Mapped Palms

There is strength in believing that fate exists, that beyond all understanding we all are carved into the Earth and merely following our destinies. You can find comfort in knowing you were made with thought and love, that you weren't simply a stray soul wandering through life. But just as the lines on our hands multiply and extend, so do our fates. With each decision we take one step forward to a path that may or may not have been the path we want.

And I believe in that. I believe that everything in the world comes together in some way.

Still, there is cruelty in this design. No one in the world is a stranger to the grief of a life taken too soon. And you might ask whether or not *that* was fate. Whether or not that was the path laid out for them. The sad truth is that it is.

Fate is not always kind. Destinies are not always glittering, shining beacons of happiness and good endings. Sometimes we find ourselves cursing at the gods, the earth, the air, anything that we can curse at. After all, it feels as though we've just been cursed ourselves, doesn't it?

And it's alright to get angry at bad fates, to delve into that pain and let it embrace you, if only for a moment. It's alright. But do not forget that after all of that, you must begin to carry the pain and move. You can't simply let it weigh on you and drag you down. The longer you let it hold you, the harder it might be for you to be able to stand up when the time comes that you have to.

So...hold your pain. Embrace it. Kiss it. Make sure you don't forget the fate of someone you love. They wouldn't want to be forgotten. But never let that pain hold *you*.

Quit Thinking

Fast-paced thoughts
Never cease THEIR demands
Multiple VOICES and multiple wants
Just rise until I feel my heart drumming
With a rhythm for every single syllable they
SCREAM in my head endlessly and without pause
While I try to yell at them to stop to NO avail and no hope
Because my voice is a small pebble compared to the landslide
Of mountains of thoughts that have no foundation or reason to exist
Other than the fact that they just do and there is nothing I am able to say
To make them stop existing as they tell me to stop existing as if I had any choice
As if it was my decision to be here and live MORE and more and more and more and

I want them gone.

I want them

gone.

I Miss You

The last thing I sent you
Was a letter of reconciliation
A letter letting you know we were here
And that we kept you in our thoughts
And in our hearts

Because this was your battle
And we could only give you words

I wish, and I can only wish
That you heard our letters
That you know we won't forget you
That we don't blame you
For wanting your pain to end

I regret that I didn't call you more
I regret that I let you down
And that you felt alone

So I'll keep you
I'll live for you

I will live in the way
You would have wanted
To see me live

Almost

I write this as the outside world thrums with energy
That I am unable to match with my own.
I write this two hours before the new year comes,
Eyes blurred and emotions tangled, I wait.

I wait for the seconds to tick down and until midnight.
I don't know if I can hold my breath that long,
But I am trying. The end of the year, at least,
I'll try not to cry. I've cried so much, after all.

And yet, as the fireworks shoot up to the skies
(where you might be resting, or watching)
I find myself wanting to drown in sleep instead.
Maybe in the astral plane my tears won't fall.

Maybe there, they'll float to your hands
And you'll be able to know that we remember.
Add those tears to the many others we've shed before,
They'll be joined by so much more as the years pass.

You had always been hopeful, always been strong,
Right up until the end you thought of everyone else.
And I know even if you had survived that year,
We might have lost you in this one.

You had a deadline.

It's not fair, but you did.
And just like your very punctual self,
You weren't late.

In less than a month, we'd have lost you for three years.
Three.
Yet it's just as painful as it was the second we were told.
I've accepted that it always will be.

But, here's to you, the life you had,
And the life that I'm living inspired by your ideals.

Happy New Year.

Freedom

The rope that has me bound is frayed and thin
Everyday I tug at it, I move beyond its limits
And I hear it creak and groan
I hear its moans almost like
Whispers
Next to my ear

I live on borrowed time, but I am not sick
Not in the ways that society categorizes sickness
I am sick in a way that cannot be healed
I am sick in a way that cannot be cured
I am sick in a way that cannot be understood

I take a step forward each time my eyes blink open
And the rope around my heart tightens, it squeezes
The threads wrapped around me vibrates
I could pluck this like a string and produce music
I could make the world hear my heart's last echo

But it is always
One day at a time
One step at a time
One breath at a time
One blink
One

Until the day the rope finally sn

aps

And then I am free.

I Am Tethered

The only reason I am still here is because

I am trapped by my own empathy

I have thought it over countless times
What would happen if I die

And each time I see the sadness in everyone I love
Immediately followed by the guilt.

How dare I, someone who is loved by so many
(or at least more than I had ever thought would love me),
Think such thoughts?

How dare I want to hurt them?
How dare I want to leave them wondering
What they could have done or said or changed?

Guilt keeps me alive. For now.
Guilt has me shackled and it has me smiling.
It has me laughing.

Anything to reassure the people around me that

I am okay, I promise.

Anything so they don't worry
And so I don't feel like more of a burden,
Because the gods know I already feel like I'm so heavy.

I don't know how they carry me.
But I am here, irregardless.
I am here.
For now, that is all that matters.

Storm Clouds

I hoist my worries over my shoulder
Like I am the moon
And they are the dark clouds
That block my sight of everything

Between the gaps I peek
And gaze upon the figure
In the middle of the sea

As she her eyes catch sight of my own

Sunlight sheltered in her smile
She is a variable unseen and unsought
But not unwanted

With her, for brief moments
I feel as if I am the sun

I feel as if I am not simply
Grasping at what's left of daylight
And that I am, to her, the brightest star

Sometimes, we are able to speak
For hours, unhindered

But sometimes, the clouds are thicker
And the waves from where she usually waits

Rise into high walls

Still, even then, her voice
Slips through the thunder
And I hear her song

And I know I will be better one day
All I need to do
Is to push myself up
And try to push through the clouds

To meet her eyes
One night at a time.

Serenity in Death

Cold, thin hands, almost like chains
Kiss my skin and take me under
The ground already wet from rain
That never stops pouring

I feel the mud enter my lungs
And fill every gap that was once
Inhabited by air

I sink to the depths of my own thoughts
They are rapid and unrelenting
Slicing through my skin like
Sharp shards of glass
From the see-through walls I built
All around
Me

The figure that had pulled me here
Stands above me, rising to the surface
I scream, mud gurgles out of my throat
Almost like a fountain of blood
With incomprehensible language
I scream but nothing comes out

The figure is my own,
The darkest ideas that have grown
Into a being more powerful than I
Now it stands where I stood
Stronger than I ever was
Stronger than I ever could be

And then I wake

Pearls of sweat and tears roll down my face
As if it will cleanse me of my memories
Of my fears

Despite all that, right before I broke away
From slumber
I felt the most peaceful I'd ever been
And that is what scares me the most

They are right...

The voices that say you are useless
That you aren't doing enough
That you're just not fit for this world

They're right.
In this moment of weakness,
Not that you are lacking in that area,
You know they are.

Your head aches from the voices
In your head, they all echo the same sentiment.
Rid the people around you of the burden
That is your own existence.

In these hours, in these minutes,
There is nothing to convince you to stay.

Yet here you are.
Why is that?

It is a question that, unfortunately,
Might go unanswered,
Until the day that you're no longer
There to ask it.

You're immature,
You're a disappointment,
You're lazy,
You don't care enough,
You care too much,
You're just...
You.

And you wonder if maybe one day,
That will be enough.

Sheepish

I never understood the concept of a black sheep in the family. How could someone be so disconnected from people they were biologically linked to? How does one find themselves lost in their own home? Misunderstood by the very people who raised them?

It was not until I grew up that I realized that I was one of those sheeps.

I never thought of it, never questioned it. However, as I sit here and think back on my short life, I realize that they've made it known to me from the beginning.

They said I was meant to be a boy at birth. That I just lacked the organ. They said I was different even as a baby. I was quiet, I didn't cry, one would think there was no infant at home. They said, even as I grew up, that in a family filled with pragmatic and logical people, there I was, creative and full of emotion.

A part of me wishes I'd stayed ignorant. It is not as if knowing has helped me.

It is not as if knowing I am different has made a difference.

They tell me to trust them.

To tell them how I feel.

This boggles my mind. They never liked knowing how someone felt. They ask so they can refute, argue, defend, fight. It was never to understand. This is something I am still trying to untie from my own roots, the need to question others and compare their perspectives with mine. It is a tedious and tiring process. And it never ends.

The intention is never to know someone. It was always to try and mold them.

To fit them, cut off the parts of them they can't quite figure out. Almost like trying to force a jigsaw piece into the wrong picture. Snipping away at something because they don't care about the big picture, they just want to finish the puzzle.

When they ask me to tell them, I feel like I'm in the deep sea, staring down the warm light of an angler fish, knowing there is terror behind it, but wanting to believe that hope that I might be wrong this time.

But no.

They ask so they can tell me I sound insane. And at times, I do feel that way. I start to believe them. I start to doubt my own sanity.

And I start to doubt my trust towards them.

They tell me to trust them.

To tell them how I feel.

But to touch fire after knowing it burns you is foolish. And I am done being the fool.

Passage

Nail clippings
Denim fading
Tattoos lightening
Hair greying
Wrinkles appearing

Time passes even in small ways
Whether we pay attention to it or not
Day by day, the -ings appear
Photographs remind us of captured half-seconds
Memories preserved

Rightfully so, we present them, or keep them hidden
As if doing either will make those kept in them live on
Past their -ing

Life in itself is cruel
It forces us to accept that it will all end
No matter how much we toil
Or deny

We are always dying

And yet
Through loving
Through hugging
Through kissing
Through hand-holding
Throughout all of this

We find purpose in living
We find contentment

Human life is well-spent
In the finding
Of who we are
And what we are meant to do

Fear and Fear's Friends

"The future awaits" is meant to be an uplifting statement
But I find myself afraid of it
It is the unknown, the unnamed, the undiscovered,

And I am no adventurer

What is to come scares me more than my past--
And that is saying a lot

It brings me down to me knees,
Clutching at the charred grass
And choking on the smoke

I feel as if the future is burning
As if my childish ambitions have

C O N S U (M E) D

And simultaneously

caved in

On itself

I am an individual plagued by fear
They chant within me, echo my thoughts
And remind me of my limits

I am always afraid of the future

For what it may hold

Or for what it may not

Click

All the things that bring me to life as I draaaaaa
—aaaag my body through the weightfulness of being

Are held by my hands

I like them
My hands are things I am too aware of
They serve as my link to the universe,
Not just in the physical sense

In every way, they connect me

I write, I draw, I create
So when the inevitable CLICK

Begins

I feel as though it is a clock
Ticking, clicking, heels clacking on glass floors
Heading to the elevator straight down to nothingness
I am running from a dead——

I knew it was bound to happen
But not so soon,
Not when my life has barely reached the pinnacle
Of what I want my happiness to be
Not when I've barely scratched the hillside up to
What I could become

I knew it was bound to happen
That I would be bound by the very thing
That kept me wanting

To live, to make, to survive

Now it is threatening me
Now it is on the verge of breaking

I do not want to be in a world
Where my hands are what grab at my throat
And cease my existence

I do not want it

So please

Let the clicking stop for now

Let time stand still

Do not remind me

Of my mortality

Past the Quarter

I have now officially gone past
A quarter of a century

“How does it feel?”

Well, it feels final
For one
Though, that is how I’ve felt about this day
Over the recent years

I always think
“This year will be the last.”
And every year thus far,
I have been wrong.

“How does it feel?”

Well, I don’t like being wrong
Except
A part of me feels relieved
That I am wrong about this particular thing.

A part of me hopes
“This year will be the last.”
And every year thus far,
I have been wrong.

Every year, I dread being here,
Yet a part of me looks at the bright side
And wishes that
One day

I will stop dreading my continued existence,
Every year, I have been wrong
But one day, I will be right.

Which one of these will come first,
I am unsure
But either way,

It would end the fight.

“How does it feel?”

Well,

It's fine.

Average.

Alright.

Another year begins.