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Through the Mansion: A Poetry Collection

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Through the Mansion: A Poetry Collection

by

Zaya Jane Moreno

A Creative Work

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts in

English Studies

December 2023

Thesis Committee:

Sarah Green, Chairperson

Judith Dorn

Michael Dando

Abstract

Expressive writing is a term a lot of people do not recognize in its formal name, but it is a way of writing that some of us use without knowing it. Expressive writing is, as the University of New Hampshire says, “personal and emotional writing without regard to punctuation, verb agreement, or other technical aspects of writing” (UNH Tales). Examples of expressive writing are free writing, journals, diary entries, and more. The idea of expressive writing is cathartic and intimate, letting the writer write what is on their mind without having to worry about the rules of writing in academia.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge everybody that broke my heart and helped mend it over the past year and half. Thanks for the inspiration that drove me to write three and a half notes books worth of full of raw emotion that I did not know I had that was burning inside of me.

Special thanks to my committee and my favorite professors Sarah Green, Judy Dorn, and Mike Dando, for being a part of my growth from an undergraduate to an almost graduate and for dealing with me. I would like to thank them individually. I would like to thank Sarah Green for helping me rekick start my love for poetry and for pushing me to be a better poet. And for letting me have my own poetry reading with snacks. I would like to thank Judy Dorn who encouraged me to have ideas in her class. And to expand on those ideas. I would like to thank Mike Dando whose choices of novels and assignments made me rethink the type of representation this world needs.

I would like to acknowledge Barbara Miller (the previous American Indian Center Director) who helped me get the Standing Rock Tribal Department of Education Scholarship Program, as she proofread my essay and help fill out the application. I would like to thank Minnesota Offices of High Education for the Minnesota Indian Scholarship for providing me the funds to go to school. I cannot forget about these people, thank you Mariah Grant and Thalia Almanza for being my rocks through grad school and pushing me to get this degree. Every time I said I wanted to quit and lay down on my bed and for getting me out of the house. I would like to thank my pets for keeping me sane and reminding me to take a break once in a while after looking at text all day. I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Abuela who loved me hard.

Loving too hard is a cursing and a blessing and

It always comes and bites me in the butt.

And I always end up crying in the end.

~Zaya

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In my family, we don't really talk about anything with each other about what is going on with our lives and how we are feeling at that given moment. For example, my grandmother died last year on my sister's eighteen birthday and as a family we never talked about her death together and how much we miss her. This is typical for Native American, Mexican, or other BIPOC families who often struggle with talking about taboo topics or their feelings in general. These feelings and unaddressed problems build inside people, leading to addiction because they never talked about what was going on in their lives. I wrote this collection of poems to really talk about how I felt, how my brother fell into a pill addiction, how my mom chose herself, and how somebody did not choose me. Also, I wrote this poem collection to talk about the hush topics that nobody in the BIPOC community wants to talk about because of the shame and what will happen after those hush topics have been aired out. Topics such as mental health, self-harm, suicide, sadness, and drug abuse should not have to be swept under the rug like a key mat. My main topics in my collection are family, mental health, and love, which are the main areas people struggle in. My poems are from the creation of expressive writing because expressive writing lets me freely write without having to worry about grammar or censor my topics.

These poems could not have happened without the impact of Kimberle Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality on how every aspect of a person affects them and critical race theory counter story which allowed me to tell my story the right way. The influences that helped me craft my poems are, Erika Sanchez, who wrote a book about going against Mexican culture talking about self, sex, and mental health. Taboo subjects that are not talked about in Mexican culture. Country turned pop singer Taylor Swift influenced how I described my images choosing the correct words. Rapper Nf helped me develop an understanding of my feelings as a poet.

Expressive Writing

Expressive writing is a term a lot of people do not recognize in its formal name, but it is a way of writing that some of us use without knowing it. Expressive writing is, as the University of New Hampshire says, “personal and emotional writing without regard to punctuation, verb agreement, or other technical aspects of writing” (UNH Tales). Examples of expressive writing are free writing, journals, diary entries, and more. The idea of expressive writing is cathartic and intimate, letting the writer write what is on their mind without having to worry about the rules of writing in academia. Learning about the rules of writing and grammar can intimidate and scare students especially those whose first language is not English. For me growing up I spoke both English and Spanish as I went into elementary school, I was put into English Language Learner classes (E.L.L.). I felt ashamed in being in that class and I stopped speaking Spanish. As I was in the ninth grade my language arts teacher pulled me aside and asked if I knew another language because I kept getting the tense for words wrong, my grammar was off, and how I did not know how to form a coherent sentence. There is an anxiety when it comes to writing papers as a student. Martinez et al. says:

found that some students have somatic anxiety or physiological reactions to anxiety, such as unpleasant feelings, nervousness, and tension, while other students experience anxiety as a result of external factors such as teachers' negative expectations, preoccupation with their writing ability, and concern for others' perceptions of their writing. In addition, some students demonstrate behavioral anxiety through avoidance, withdrawal, and procrastination in completing their writing assignments (352).

Students at all levels doubt themselves as writers, which is why expressive writing is needed to let loose of the rules, requirement, and enjoy writing without feeling anxious or scared of writing.

How can Expressive Writing Help with Writing About Emotions

The first study on expressive writing was first created and completed by James W. Pennebaker and S.K. Beall in 1986. Their study was the building block for future studies to be done on expressive writing. This first study there was a control group that wrote about a topic picked by the observers and a variable group who wrote about their emotions. In this study, participants met and wrote three or four times for about 15-20 minutes. What Pennebaker and S.K. Beall notice after their first study was “writing about earlier traumatic experience was associated with both short-term increases in physiological arousal and long-term decreases in health problems” (Baikie and Wilhelm 338). This study showed the impact of writing about a picked topic or emotions on one’s mental health. With future studies came different outcomes.

Expressive writing has been used as a tool in therapy settings to help people alongside individual therapy and writing helps to write cathartically on the page and let the emotions out on the page without being judged. Expressive writing benefits people as Doctor Mugerwa and Doctor Holden says its, “Reduced anxiety and depressive symptoms amongst those with maladaptive rumination” and “Reduction in depressive symptoms, trauma-related cognitions and general behavioural problems in children with post-traumatic stress disorder” (Mugerwa and Holden 661). It helps with the body as well. Expressive writing can be a person’s main source of therapy but is not recommended even though it is cost effective to people who cannot afford to see a therapist.

A later study on expressive writing with grief was done by Rubin, et al. Where they had the participants write about good memories of their loved ones for five minutes while the neutral group wrote about a random event that has happened in their lives. The conclusion of this study, “However, the decrease in negative affect was greater for those in the neutral writing condition

than the positive writing condition” (Rubin, et al. 557). People who wrote about a random event felt worse than people who wrote about their dead loved ones, because “neutral writing serves as a distraction from distressing thoughts or emotions (Rubin, et al. 557). Their writing did not serve a purpose for them. Another study on expressive writing done by Stephenson, Kittredge, and Rosen uses four different groups to conduct their study “(Narrative-Control, Haiku-Control, Haiku-Nature, or Haiku-Negative Life Event)” (Kittredge and Rosen 46). These groups did a survey and wrote 20 minutes for 3 days. After 20 days when the study was done, the participants came back and took another survey on how their study groups affected them. What they found in that study is that “writing narrative even about a control topic led to decreases in anxiety and depression in comparison with writing in haiku form” (Kittredge and Rosen 52). Haikus poems are three-lines of five, seven, and five syllables talking about nature. With this study haikus “led to increased creativity relative to writing in narrative about a neutral topic” (Kittredge and Rosen 52). The participants had to think of the language they were using to achieve the haiku form. This study had numerous groups to determine what are the positive and negative effects of expressive writing. There was no right answer on how expressive writing can benefit people. Expressive writing therapy is not a one size fit all treatment. Expressive writing is still writing, and some people do not enjoy writing about their feelings on a page.

Writing Poetry

Expressive writing is used by everybody to write their heart on the page without having to worry about the grammar rules of writing. Once that person is done writing about their feelings they discard or tuck the paper in a folder never to be seen again to revise it and feel better about themselves. Not everybody can be a poet. People assume that writing poetry is easy because it is just a couple of lines and a few rhymes and boom it is a perfect poem with no

revision needed at all and no depth to it. With poetry it takes time to learn the craft and it takes time to practice doing the craft. When I first started to learn and write about poetry, I thought this was a useless craft that had no significance in my academic career. I thought stories were better to analyze and to write because of literary devices and multiple meanings used in writing prose and that I was a writer not a poet.

Until I had a change of heart on poetry from a couple of teachers who challenged me to write poetry in different poetic forms and themes I did not like to write about. As well as doing scansion on different poems present in my classes. Learning about the meter, stress and unstress, and other poetic devices. It has taken me years and many poems to perfect how I want different themes formatted on the page to make it aesthetically pleasing. How many books I had to read to build up my vocabulary, to see how the author created images on the page and see how words flow with each other. So, my poems sound natural as possible and are not forced. How I have to pick and choose my words wisely due to the poetic form I choose to challenge myself. The times I have to go back to revise my poems. To describe certain places and feelings because what I said was too broad and not clicking in my reader heads in what I really meant to say. How my metaphor does not flow or does it metaphoric thing. When I make revision and my original title does not go with my revised poem new context and feeling. Being a poet is not easy. It takes time, dedication, tears, and coffee to craft a poem and build a collection and asking yourself why you are doing this?

Chapter 2: Through the Mansion

I: Family

The Mansion

On this rainy day I took a trip
To a place I wouldn't think
I ever step foot, again in my life
But here I am waiting for a cab
In the lobby of my apartment building
Thinking as I fiddle with my thumbs to reduce my anxiety

The cab ride there was the longest 20 minutes of my life
It felt like hours passed
Since I kept seeing the same trees
With falling orange, yellow, and red leaves
Over and over again
NF's Mansion was playing on the radio
In the background
All I kept thinking was what would happen when I get there?

The cab stops, I am here
I pay the cabby money and
Watched as he sped off
Into the treacherous overgrown fall trees
I turned back to the house
To see the rusty fence

That once has been an Onyx black
Now a mixture of
brown and green
and brittle to the touch
I take the key off my neck
To see the years of damage it has been through
Bent, discolored, faded
Before putting it into the lock
Until I heard a clink
I opened the gate and I hear a squeak

Here I am
The grounds are lively as all ways
The roses are blooming
The strawberries are thriving
The birds are chirping
Until I looked up to see that decrepit Mansion
With its broke windows on the second floor
As Ravens weaved in and out of them
Pannels of wood nailed to the first-floor window
I walk up
That broken cobble stone pavement slowly
Holding my key in between my fist

Wishing I wasn't here
Inside the mansion
Looked normal with pictures
Of my family hanging on the walls
With toys sprawled out on the floor
The decorum is cozy and welcoming
like a happy family lives here
Who aren't not crazy
Don't drink or do drugs
People who actually love each other

The second floor is a different story
Everything is broken up there
Or broken beyond repair
The paint is peeling off the walls
The carpet is ripped to shreds
There are bite marks and holes
The banister is broken in half
The chandelier is hanging on by a thread
The smell of vomit lingers in the air

Until I entered my room
My room is just how I left it

All those years ago
With the smell of wonderstruck in the air
The colors of my duvet, clothes, furniture, and walls
Are fading to a grey
This room once was full of life
Color
Hope
Warmth
And
Happiness
Now its sad, lonely, and cold
Like my soul
Knock
I turn to see my brother
Switching the lights on and
Turning off his flashlight
What are you doing here??
I asked him trying not to cry
Same reason you are here
My brother pulls out a toy from his pocket
To put this on my mantel in my room
Can you wait for me?
He nods his head yes as I pulled

Out three notebooks out my backpack

To place on my mantel

I say a little pray and walk away

Meth

I remember the first time

I saw meth in its solid form

In an orange prescription bottle

Sitting underneath the yellowish oven light

On top of the white microwave

I knew my brother

Crushed pills with a candle

And snort it with dollar bills in his bathroom

To hide his shame from

His kids and me

When my brother and I where younger

We where two peas in the pods

We did a lot of things

Like play Super Smash Bros and the Sims 2

On the Gamecube late at night

As we got older, we were forced

To go our separate ways

His addictions got in between our relationship

He chose bad women, drugs, alcohol

To fill that hole in his chest

Over the years there would be

Radio silence between him and I

For weeks, months at a time

And maybe years,

Because he chose his own path

And got put back into jail

But at least he's sober again

And back to being the brother

I knew when we were younger

Giggling and getting chased by wasp

But this only last for so long

Until he gets released

And he goes back to the other version

Of himself

I knew when I saw that bottle with meth in it

Our relationship will never be the same

And it never has

A Confession

(TW: Eating Disordered and Mommy Issues)

One puff before class

Another puff after class

A Puff for dinner

And a bowl to top the night.

To stop my mouth from salivating

And my hands from dragging the step stool

Across the tile floor in the kitchen to reach that box of Kind bars

I had eight of already, today

But I yearn for something more than eating

I yearn for a hole that can never be

Filled with the cement and flowers I needed growing up

But that hole is filled with soil and pebbles

That you threw in the first place

Because you didn't want me to grow

As a person

Or have something permanent

That you didn't have as a child

So as the years go by
As you throw your soil and pebbles, into my hole
They get washed away from the rain
And I had to rebuild myself, all over again
Turning to things that comfort me for awhile
From your wicked words and sly smile

It's been nice not having you
Throw your soil and pebbles
Into my hole for a year.
And it's a relief.
I can finally grow more things
And have something permanent
You never gave me.

My hole has taken some of your
Soil to plant a tree
And has taken your pebbles
To outline the garden
Of all the thoughts
I have in my head
About what love is
And what love should be.

I took what you gave me

And I'm making it work

Just because you don't have cement and flowers

Doesn't mean you can't make things out

Of pebbles and soil.

Mother

I looked at mirror today

And saw you

Reflected towards me

You always told me

You don't look like me

But you look just like your dad

But I saw the resemblance today

As I put on makeup

The red lip stick makes

My freckles pop more

The eye liner defines my dark brown eyes

I put on a dress

And my hoops

And I see you

I never want to be you

I never want to treat my kids

Like you treated us

I have problems sleeping

Because of you

I can't trust anybody

I don't know what love is

So, every time

I look in the mirror

I reminded of everything

I despise

And don't want to be

A Letter to my mom

I wish you work on yourself

By healing your Inner child

Healing your trauma

I want you to get better

I've been going to therapy

And taking my meds

I've been hanging out with

People who have a good Influence

On me

I don't smoke or drink

But I am at peace

I did my part by

letting you in again

I want you to be around

To see your grandcat

And future grandbabies

You are my mom

I want you there

To see me get married

To watch me get my doctorate degree

If only you get better

If not

I cannot associate with you
Every time you come around
You can start a fire on
Metal and
Make It melt down
You can start a fire on water
And make all the fishes burn
It's this power you have
But don't want to tame
If you want me in your life
Get better
Be the mom
I love when your sober
Cause I don't
Want to hate you forever

My Spanish

My Spanish is like my grandparents' house
Not updated in ten years, smelly, and messy
With grammatical errors everywhere
And a lose sock on the ground
But my tongue still remembers what it was like in its prime
How the words slipped off it
Now the tongue only remembers how to say Te amo
And yo tengo hambre

My Spanish is like the border
I can't get across it to get to the other side
Like I did when I was younger
To spend time in Mexico with my family
Now I sit on the edge waiting from them to come to me.
Hoping they can understand me.

If you asked me if I am fluent in Spanish, I will tell you
My Spanish is a history of people that came before me
A group of people who got raped, killed, enslaved
People who were forced to speak the Spanish tongue
Only to drop their native tongue and to take on other people's religion.
While they destroyed their land...art.

And melted all their artifacts and molded them into gold.
To use as currency.

My Spanish tells the story of Juan Moreno
Assimilating to the American ways
Almost completely eradicating his accent when he speaks English
But that accent is still there
As he teaches his kids how to read a ruler
And he points to the $\frac{1}{4}$ mark
Only to say forth
But that accent never goes away
As he speaks to his mom in Spanish.

If you asked me if I am fluent in Spanish, I will tell you
A story of a little Mexican girl sitting in ESL class with her workbook number two out
Circling which picture is an orange.
As she sits there wondering why she is here.
She already knows English perfectly fine.
She doesn't need another labeled added to her list
Of what she is.
From that day on in that ESL Class
She dropped Spanish
Only to regret it years later

When she can't talk to her abuela about her past

My Spanish is like the guilt I carry with me

As I think about that day in ESL class

I think about how people perceived me

For having darker skin and speaking another language

And how they wanted me to assimilate

To their cultural

To their language

Because how would they know

How to deal with me?

My Spanish tells a story of

Questioning my self-worth as a Latina

Who can't speak the language?

Of her grandma who watched

Her for the first five years of her life.

Only for her to drop the language

Like a candy falling out of a piñata in a grassy backyard.

And her trying to pick the candy up without

Picking up the grass.

Birthday

My birthdays seem to be the worst days

This ideology stemmed when I was kid

My birthday is in December

So is Christmas

Its sort of a double whammy for my parents

And everybody forgets it

Because Christmas duh

Or tries to combine your

Birthday and Christmas gifts together

So they don't have to get you more presents

Or go out into that stamped at the mall

The worst birthday I ever had

Was the first one I had without my grandma

I thought she could save the shitty day

I was having

Because she always makes me smile

And slips me a 20 or a 5

Like we are making a drug deal

I never cried so hard in my bathtub

When I remember she was dead

It also didn't help that

I got dumped by Mr. Bear
That following weekend

The best birthday I ever had
Or the one I can remember
Was when I turned 7
I wore a Viking's outfit
Because the Vikings were playing
I had a Dora the explorer cake
I cried that day in frustrated
Because of the trick candle on that cake
Maybe I remember that day because
My dad felt present
He was there
I felt so love that day

A letter to my dad

I enjoy our little moments

Like yesterday,

How we made pancakes shaped like

Sharks, butterflies, and ducks

As we sipped coffee together

But sometimes I wish

It was just us

I never had a chance

To have you all to myself

There was Jenny

Then Zach

Emily

And Max

There wasn't just us

For a bit

There wasn't

Just a Zaya and Juan

The two of us

Against the world

I never got to know you

You were always gone

Because of work

And I missed you

Like all the time

You were supposed to be

There for me

You were supposed to be

There when I graduated

I wanted you around

Not Jenny

You

You where my dad first

Baby

Every time I go to Target
I somehow find myself in the baby section
Looking at and touching the tiny clothes
And picturing what my baby
Would look like wearing a baby Yoda outfit
Or this tiny yellow frilly dress

Then I get sad while looking at the outfits
And being in this section at Target
Knowing I can't have a baby
And I find myself hating

All these tiny

Shirts

Pants

Socks

And Shoes

That surrounds me

And I go look at something else

I have been told all my life

Over and over again

No babies for you

Ever!!!!

I know it's a women's thing
To want a baby
And to smell that new baby smell
Have her own family
So I kept wanting a baby to myself
And lied to myself
Saying I never want a baby

But things changed for me in April
As a person with a defective heart
I had to get a check up
After ten years of not having one
To see if my heart hasn't
Ripped a stitch or beats irregularity.
After a sonogram of my heart
My heart doctor after for many years
Told me I can have a baby
And that I would have to come
In at 20 weeks to
Make sure the baby doesn't have
What I have
Right there in that doctors office

I pictured a little me
Standing next to my dad
Whining and putting her arms up
Begging my dad to pick her up
When he is in the middle of
Playing cornhole
And my dad giving into her
Things changed for me that May
My love and I broke up after four years
I didn't want my baby to be around
His family and his dad
Calling our baby some racist name
Because she is Mexican
His family is more chaotic than mine
So I packed my boxes, my cat, and left

As I write this
Almost a year has went by
I sit at my parents house
Wondering if I want

A

Baby

Anakin

“You are the best thing that has ever been mine” (Swift line 14)

I remember when I first got you

You were this tiny orange mess with crusty eyes in Emily's arms

She was crying because she couldn't have you

You were cuddler and friendlier than Kitty the black cat at home

Which is why Emily liked you

Emily broke that day when she gave me you

And said you were potty trained as she went away

I was scared of you

Committing to you for the next 18 years of my life

I knew what was going to happen

after our time ends together

I would wallow in sadness wondering why

I did that to myself

Then you nuzzle up to my thighs

And claimed me as your human

And I fell in love with you

You open this door

I never knew was sealed shut

Anakin you have shed light to my life

And to others lives as well

You have coined the nickname Lil Man from your uncle Zach

Who was there at pet smart when I was getting your tag

For your collar and he put it on there

I think you love him more than me

Your uncle Max on the other hand claims he don't love you but he does

He just wants to be a manly man

Your cousin Imala almost took you,

but your uncle Dakota don't like cats

The funny thing is he sends us snap chats of cat toys

In denial of liking you

You are the best thing that's ever been mine

And I wouldn't trade you for the world

II: Mental Health

1-800-273-8255

I always thought about ending my own life

When I was young and now, I am surprised I made it this far

I am now dazed and confused about

What to do with my own life

Cause when I nineteen

Nobody cares about me

Nobody asked how I was doing

Nobody invited me to do things

I was left alone to rot in a dark basement

Watching shows and playing games

Crying to myself wishing I had somebody

Then I left that basement and that city

And the people who were supposed

To care for me they finally did

But it was too late to get that girl back

I was already standing on the edge

Of life and death

Then I remembered Dash

The three and a half leg cloud

And the letters I wrote about him

About who was going to walk him

And love him like I did.

This dark feeling came back at twenty four

During the happiest times of people lives

The snow was falling

As I questioned my existed rocking back and forth

In the dark cold basement

Wondering if life was really worth living

With all this pain and suffering

Just to be alone all by myself

In this thing I call a relationship

Where everything is on me

As I give 99.9% while he only gives .1%

I picked up the phone

Not wanting to be alone

Fall

I think about fall
And how the leaves change from green to
Red, orange, or brown
As they fall to the ground
The air is more crisper
My wardrobe becomes darker
The nights become longer
Everything is more peaceful
Then I remember winter is coming
And my depression gets worst
I pushed those thoughts out
And think of hayrides
Carving pumpkins
Apple picking
Drinking hot Apple cider
Falling in love
And thinking life is good
Around the campfire
Telling ghost stories and drinking booze
While making a s'more
Getting our fingers sticky
And feeling the cold autumn breeze

Brushed up against our ears

As you smile at me

Just like you do

When we have our scary movie nights

Were we wear our favorite

Pajamas bottoms the black ones with pumpkins on them

And eat popcorn, blue sour patches, m&m and croissants sandwiches

As I hold you closed

When Freddy Krueger pops up

But this never happens to me

Its just a dream of mine

To do all this

With somebody I love so dearly

Body

My body has always been pushed

To the limit

Through many years of running

On the treadmill every night

Telling myself another mile

Suffocating my stomach in a wrap

To make it flatter

Squatting to exist or leave a room

Because butts just don't happen

I would starve myself

Cause my peers where all skinner than I was

And could get boyfriends

Because they were small

feminine, and had hair down to their bubble butts

While I felt like a beach whale and outsider

Who wanted to tear off their skin

Because I looked so different

So I limit what I could eat

And thought about the results and what

I would look like

If I lost 20 pounds

But I gave into eating
When I would shake and
Not think straight

I would binge eat
Cause food gave me comfort
When nobody else would
It didn't judge me
For weighing over a hundred pounds
As a fifth grader
And having a bigger stomach than anybody else
It didn't tell me I wasn't worth a damn thing
It didn't hate me
Like everybody else around me
The words dug deeper
And I turned to food
As an escape
Because I wasn't worth a damn thing

I have come to the conclusion
That I will never like my body
Even if my orange cat
Enjoys our morning cuddles on my boobs

Or that every guy I have been with
Liked the shape of my breast
How my waist is easy to grab
How my thighs could crush them
No matter how many compliments I get
I will never love my body

Scrub

I scrub myself pink
Every time I am in the shower
To get you off of me
I don't want to remember your fake love
As you held me tight and kissed me goodbye
I don't want to remember your
Kind gestures of you cutting up
A steak and feeding it to me
As you smile and look at me full of love
I don't want to remember your body
And feeling every part of it
Thinking about it every night
And how smooth it was
So, I scrub myself raw
Thinking about how stupid I am
Letting you into my life
My heart
And my body
I feel so dirty
Used
Unloved
You said you didn't want to ruin

My birthday

But you already did

Sometimes I like to lie to myself

In the mirror when I wear colors
That are not black
I pretend to smile and
Wonder what fucking socks I am
Wearing with this outfit
Cause I can't wear green socks
With this purple shirt
Or navy socks with yellow
Also, the idea of wearing color
Is to make myself approachable
And less scary among the male population
Somehow this four-foot nine-inch brown
Woman scares them
So, I said Hell naw
And embrace my true self
As I pulled everything
Out of my closet that was me
Not this fake me
But the real me
Who is part douche bag and emo
The person who wore crazy outfits
With no remorse

Because she wanted to be different
She wanted to stand out
By wearing the hoops her ancestors wore
To show how strong and loud she is
That she can write her own story.

The Room

It's easier to repaint walls
Windows, doors, doorknobs
Rip carpet out
lay down tile or wood
Changed a light fixture
Rearranged your furniture
Than to admit
What has happened in this room
All the blood that has been spilled
The mold growing on the ceiling
And that monster that lives underneath
Everything

III: Love

The car ride home

As you drive us home in this rainstorm
You're fuming with anger as your face is turning pink
And how you are scrunching your nose
You squint your blue eyes hard puckering up your lips
As you take your deep heavy breaths
I can't take you seriously with that red argyle sweater
I picked out for you to wear to meet my parents
Which ended in a disaster
Because they said I could
Do better than you right to your face
And that a pretty educated girl
Shouldn't be with a tall tatted uneducated man like you
But jokes on them you are quite educated
You went to Juilliard and got a full ride there
To play second chair violin for their orchestra
Now you are a music professor there
Teaching a program for talent and impoverished kids
Who grew up like we did

So I distract myself from your anger
By looking at your tatted forearm
And see the one you got to remind you of me

The little ghost llama drinking coffee

Because you wanted my presence

Even when I am not around

I look down at the ring you got me asking me

To be your forever you knew when you meet me that day

In my black sweater, plaid red skirt, wearing my black tights, and black boots

laughing loud holding a glass of cheap white wine

Playing Mario kart with my high school friends in some loft in Soho

Asking you questions who invited you

And how tall are you

Since your almost two feet taller than me

I than dragged you around the city

Because I wanted some time with you

And my brother asleep on the bathroom floor

I showed you my favorite Halloween decorations

And where to get the best blueberry waffles from

And how many we ate as we talked

I look back at you and stare at you full of love

A love that has not faded

You feel my eyes on you and smile

You take you right hand of the wheel

And place it on my hand and give it a squeeze

This is how you say I love you

Flight

My flight arrived on time
I was so nervous and didn't eat at all that day
It took me a week to pack
I called you on the phone
tp asked what I should bring to wear specifically
You said anything
I frowned over the phone
I asked if I should bring a dress
You said no you weren't taking me anywhere fancy
I cried a bit as I packed
My clothes, passport, and paper from my doctor
Saying that I have wires in my chest
So, TSA knows that I am not packing a gun
So the metal detector doesn't go off
When I go through holding my paper in my hand
They gave me a nodded saying I was good
I put my pink boots back on
And recollect my things
I felt a little rush and sacred
What if I forget to grab my iPad
I rolled over to the nearest chair and repacked my things
The morning has been chaos, so coffee is what I needed

At that moment

I was nervous not meeting you

But thinking this is my first flight

My flight landed early

I was confused about the layout of the airport

Lucky the blonde lady who was sitting next to me

Lead me to the exist of Ford Airport

Which was smaller than Minneapolis airport

But cozier though

I rolled my suitcase to an empty spot

To text you that I am here

You didn't respond until 40 minutes later

Saying why are you so early and sorry to

Keep you waiting

I went outside to get some fresh air

Thinking you bailed on me

I saw a little blue car pull into the street

With your face looking through the windshield

You pulled over and helped me with my bags

There you were standing at six feet

In your white and gray sweatpants

Smiling at me putting my bags in your car

My flight leaves in two and half hours
All I want to do is cuddle you on this gray couch
And not move.
I felt so safe with you
I wanted that moment to last forever
Cause I know you will never give me another chance
The chance you did give me was my last
But we had leave the Airbnb soon
We got up from the couch to pick the place up
I go into the room we shared, to pack
While you dissembled your Xbox and computer cords
To put into your car.
I wanted to feel too safe with you forever
I tried not to cry as I put everything back into my suitcase
Remembering that I still have things in the bathroom
I catch you holding your computer monitor near the door
You tell me you're going to the gas station to fill up
And asked if I needed anything
I said a swift kiss to the ass
To lighted the sad mood
That surrounded this moment
You laughed saying they are out of that, You leave
In that moment I hopped you would come back

I didn't want to be left here abandon and alone

I looked down and saw you left your slides

And your clothes

I sighed and ran into the room to leave you

Something to remind you of me and

our weekended together.

You help me with my bags

Bringing them down the stairs

To put them in your blue car.

You pull into the street

And we are silent

You put your hand on my thigh

I try not to cry

You pull over

And help me with my bags

You give me one last kiss

And you leave

Here I am sitting in 19 D

Bawling my eyes out

Because you will

Never like me like I like you

Left

I never wanted to leave
But you pushed me away
Never wanting to communicate with me
Or hang out with me
I now wait for your name
To pop up on my phone screen
With a message explaining yourself
I am nervous now tugging at my sleeves
Thinking you forget about me
And our moments together
Feeling used and worthless
Thinking I am incapable of being loved
Because you can't soften your heart
And believe somebody likes you
For you,
flaws and baggage

Forget Part I

I always forget what love feels like
Then I look at you
As the sun rays shine on you
Making your orange coat darker
As you tuck your paws in under your belly
And as the shape of your pupils turn into yellow diamonds
I gaze at your beauty wondering how I got
This lucky that you called me yours
As you purr into my ears
In the early morning rubbing your scent on me
As we cuddled with your pupils dilated
And how happy you are to be there with me
Even if you love your uncles more than me
And cause havoc such as
Sticking your paw in my printer
As I print a reading out for school
Meowing at your uncle Max's door at 3am
Or getting into a paw fight with Kitty the black cat
Your presence has made me feel loved
And that I can give love
Because cats won't love somebody you can't love back

Forget Part II

I always forget
What love feels like in my
Soul, body, and mind,
All that mushy shit
With chocolate hearts, kisses, and hugs
Late night walks to get snacks
Target runs
Cuddles
Right now, I feel hollow
Wondering if love is even for me
Or that maybe I am destined to be alone
For the rest of my life
To be that hot single rich Aunty
My niece hopes I'll be
But I do miss that love feeling
In my soul, body, and mind
It makes me warm and bubbly
Looking at life through a magical glass ball
Where the princess gets the prince
And they dance the night away
Looking at each other with love
But I hate when men look

At me with love
It's a deceiving look for trying
to get into my pants
pretending to be in love with me
I have been burned by that look
Too many times
I stopped believing in love
With humans.

Crazy Cat Lady

I always wondered who my person is
And it better not be my orange cat Anakin
If he is I am becoming a crazy fucking cat lady
With 20 or so cats on a farm in the middle of nowhere
Drinking my girly drinks watching the cats at
Night chasing fireflies in the moon light

But like still am I the only person
Who wonders if they have a person
Out there in that polluted sea
With pop cans, condoms, plastic straws
And algae that makes the sea green

Why is the sea polluted
Why can't I meet a nice guy
Who can rub my feet and
Call me pretty while feeding me grapes
On a red velvet couch with Anakin cuddling me
That's the dream

I have no hopes on finding my person
After one two three

Eight hundred failed talking stages

I am burnt out and tired of men

Asking me what my favorite color is

Or what I like to do

Cause I don't even know

What I like to do

But for some stupid reason I believe in love

I don't know why

Its probably all those Taylor Swift songs

That make me believe in

A fairy tale type of love

Where I wear a ball gown and run barefoot in a castle

Singing songs as Anakin chases me

Maybe I am still a believer of love

Because I have never seen a loving relationship

In my life ever

I have seen heartbreak, people, getting cheating, abuse

And more that I'll think of more later but not now

I am trying to pinpoint my love and hate relationship with love

Because I have many memories are playing in my head

Of what love is and none of them are good

The Picture

I watched as my brother put his toy on the mantel
His room became brighter, less heavy, and breathable again
After years of trying to catch our breath and stay afloat
He began to cry and so did I for a solid 10 minutes
Until my brother wiped his eyes
We said our goodbyes, hugged, and he was off
Once he left, I begin to hear
The opening of the Paramore song
“The Only Exception” playing outside his door
I wiped my own eyes and try to get myself together
As I walked out of my brother’s room
The hallway had doors with chains on them
None of them belonged to me but to my mother
Pictures with false lies
Showing a mother and her four kids happy
But are not
I kept listening
Turning my head in every direction
Wondering where its coming from
I stumbled to picture
In between the doors labeled
Juan and Mel’s divorce

Mel's List of Lovers

The picture resembles some hope I have about Love

In the picture it's me and my unknown lover

At an alter during an October night

As the leaves turned yellow, red, and orange

Were so in love

The thing with me is I fall in love hard

Which is a cursing and a blessing

And I always get my heart broken in the end

Wondering why they couldn't love me like I love them

As I cry into my bed sheets at night

Maybe because I choose the right person

At the wrong time

A phrase I detest and want to stomp on

Every time I hear it

Or the phrase stop looking for

Love and it will come and find you

Like no

But I have faith I will find somebody

As I step out the Mansion and lock it

I see my brother lighting one up

On the broken steps as the rain pelted the pavement

He looks at me and asks, "Cracker Barrel?"

I nodded my head yes as he passes me the piece

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