

How Best to Stage a Breakdown

H.M. Reynolds, hmrwrites

Presented by

My poetic Side 

Dedication

To Jim, Tom, Laura, Kris, Jo and John.

In no particular order, thank you all equally. I can never repay you,

so here?s some crappy

poetry instead.

Acknowledgement

Many thanks to Callum, Dad, Mum and Esther.

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About the author

In 2017, whilst aged 18, I was long-listed in Christ Church Oxford's Tower Poetry Competition for 16-18 year olds, for my poem 'Strand One'. This was my first ever poetry competition.

My name is Hannah Miriam Reynolds and I have been writing since I was 15. I chose to drop out of university within the first two months in order to pursue poetry seriously and turn my notes into collections. Originally from and based near Brighton, I aim to reach a diverse audience by challenging the misconceptions of contemporary poetry and offering new perspectives on challenging issues, such as mental health, relationships and manipulation.

My main inspirations are nature and personal experiences. I also credit my A-level English teacher Carole, for giving me the confidence to write, and for introducing me to Seamus Heaney's work. Through Heaney, I have developed a love and appreciation for the craft and skill involved in the process of writing poetry.

summary

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Strand One

Yon

Neurasthenic

Ocean

How Best to Stage a Breakdown

No longer hear the noise before the alarm that tells me I'm about to wake up.
Warns me that the fantasy stops here and it's time to start again.
Tells me to stop and prepare for fresh hell.

I had this old clock radio with
the loudest alarm and
I had to rush to it every morning
before it went on long enough for my dad to hear it because
I woke up too early for his sleep but
the alarm made a noise before the alarm noise that
always woke me up

and then I started hearing it in everyday life
in painful situations and
I was waiting to wake up

then I'd hear it during panic attacks and realise
I wasn't going to wake up
because just as that noise bridged the gap between
sleep and wake it also bridged the gap between
mind and reality
that noise didn't get me out of bed
I actually had to do that myself

that noise is not my cue to hang around and
wait for the alarm but the indication that
I need to change direction and
re-start my thinking need to get up and
out of it before my dad wakes up

I told a therapist once that

I hear this noise and she told me to
stop being dramatic
and silly
and went on to suggest that
an adult dose of prozac was
a good form of treatment to gift a fifteen year old

Thank you for the drugs. Thank you very much. I'm sorry I didn't
Quite finish off the job.

Strand One

Scribbling formulas to feel slightly important, but
It will never get you anywhere.
Rocking back and forth, sink into the floor.

Facing your fears isn't really about overcoming them; it's about
Reading notes with lumps in throats, whilst you're
Stuck with nothing to stop you, but you.

Bacteria. Inferior. Resisting the urge to waste away.
This is all you've become -
Numb, cold, stone.

And who are we to deceive?
Who are we to manipulate the twisted thoughts of others,
Until memories collide with their dreams?

Crush their skulls in on themselves and make their spines bleed.
Break them beyond breaking point, until
They've fallen on their knees.

The necessity to be self-centred and shut away.
You're out of touch with yourself.
Disconnected. Disjointed. Definitely vacant.

My brain is hurting.
Trying to forget positive words from a girl who still believed -
As I find myself lurching forward, then tilting back.

Back. Again.
They lecture me and it tortures me.
'Things will get better for this girl'; 'She's too young to know any different.'

Deliver us to a world where everyone is equal, and

It wouldn't be the same.

Yon

One day, our world is going to reverse, and
I'll be watching; keeping you
On the edge of your seat, until it hurts.
You don't get anywhere in this world, unless you
Know how to blend in (I know,
The glorious, decisive
Power of sin).

Couldn't fall asleep Saturday nights.
Turning, reversing. But
Why say a life takes
Set years to be lived, when those
Faded to a dusty rose, are
Younger than we've ever been?

I hear you smile. I covet it
(Innocently). But there is
No way for me to follow you into this. I put
Blood under nails for you, but now the
Sun only shines through to mock us.

A kick from being too mild ? I need
Levity over the light you attract.
This road is stronger than the
Others less taken; curls
Into me, not far away from me.
The sun follows you because
All plants lean that way.

Came out of my mouth and
Into the wild - can't
Light the fire without a little noise.
Run your finger through my hair, until

The bad in you outweighs the good.
Death as a song on repeat;
Your sun isn't rising up for a while.

Mark the dates on my calendar.
I am eating again (but only because I hate fainting).
Your voice carries.

Neurasthenic

I know who you are.
It was years ago but
You haven't changed. Took it
From me, when I was so
Lonely, and still
So worried. Copied
Phrases, words and
Phrases. Left to work with
Rotten rigidity as imagination,
Instead of
Free-flowing thoughts. I
Think I recognise you; lost
Scope of true meaning and
Learnt to
Drown in reverse;
Filling your lungs up with air,
Making your mind fit to burst.

Tight. Constrained. Constricted.
You haven't changed a bit. Everyone
Stays the same, 'We all
Change, we all lie, we all
Remain sane'.
Lost out to time with your
Loose ends, forever depending on
Different versions of yourself to
Pull through and save you.
I really recognise you. Forever
Crossing out to
Re-do and re-do over (always
Delegating to some future self). Because

How is nothing equated to the

Overwhelming sense of
Analysing everything? Can she
See that you are
Killing yourself with
Two stones, because
The first was thrown in
Retaliation, and the second
Hit the target with the
Weight of experience.

Ocean

forcing yourself forwards by struggling
tried to steer backwards to
keep to the past but that meant I had to guard
myself from letting you down by
spewing out nonsense just want no contact with
anyone outside of you please
take me out of hazier days and drive through silence together
then give me to the water
a kind that can't be irrigated a body that can't be drained
before you say silent goodbye
travel on to your better destination before I begin to
hunt out time because
you make your own mental montages stronger than reality
reels only hold the highlights but
our real holds all the failures as well that makes me question
how long can I keep telling myself

I am working towards being enough for you trying to find by
winding round and waiting
the alarm sings before starting but gets quieter when
you grant it focus only
had one purpose but we were too naïve to drink it all in for

.
ten days is more than
we will ever need shifting our lives around to
take view of the better map and
where next to seek which window to look out of and
which new vulnerability to cradle
trying to do this amidst the with the background noise but
can't settle the sun through
burnt eyes holding too dear for being here again as if you
needed to check up on me the

second I let you back in because I feed problems with
different patterns hoped to
row through the storm because we played it off as light rain
an access denied to many
too many than we're happy with begin to digress into
comfortable climates from
times easier lived but harder accepted threw you
out and into so I could
parade the deck alone living the life of glory as a life of selfish