

Anthology of TradingMyWoundsFor Art



Presented by

My poetic Side 

Dedication

To all of the precious wounds, I once thought would break me.

summary

Living My Prison Sentence

The World I Believe In

The Famous False Depiction

To those who have also been Sexually Assaulted. This message is for you.

My Precious Rainfall

Living My Prison Sentence

New day, same familiar jail cell.

Imprisoned by the unpredictable warden, named *emotion*.

Sharing a cell with the Angel of Death, falsely identifying as my *thoughts*.

Forced to surrender to its co-conspirator, the one i call, *regret*.

Subjected to the harmful camaraderie between the two.

Both visiting from their home, the land of *my self-consciousness*

Branded by my afflictions.

Suffocated by all of the words I leave unspoken.

Mocked by the despondent soundtrack that vibrates through the prison walls.

Antagonized by the deafening pitches of shame, born from the lyrics of my testimony.

The World I Believe In

I believe in a world that will be whole.

I believe in eyes admiring ones soul, not skin tone.

I believe in hearts fostering love for all, not just a hand picked selection.

I believe in a human kind that is sympathetic, not apathetic.

I believe in pain being empathized, not criticized.

I believe in trauma that births strength, not destruction.

I believe in love creating linkage not bondage.

I believe in change.

I believe in us.

The Famous False Depiction

One true love.

The expectation and fantasy i trained my self discovery around. The continuous re-evaluation that was entangled with defining my purpose based on having another heart mend my own. "Too big", "Too talkative", "Too complicated" - the ever growing phrases i mentally engraved into my reflection in the mirror. But what really defines our reflection? Is it our self proclaimed images or labels? Or is it the imprint reflected back at us through the eyes of another? When are we enough? When are satisfied? **We subconsciously block the recognition of all the red flags through the use of rose colored glasses.** We then welcome anger into our hearts when it self implodes. **We consciously pack our open wounds with deception and infect them with parasitic people who are nothing more than a malicious place holder.** We sit beside our gluttony at the table and become confused when the final meal appears to be dissatisfactory. **A stomach full, but eyes that are starving.**

To those who have also been Sexually Assaulted. This message is for you.

'No' was the **ONE** word I **continued** to speak to him.

'No' was the **ONE** word my body tried to **scream** when my voice was **unable** to.

'No' was the **ONE** word that **NEVER** should have gone on **deaf** ears.

'No' was the **ONE** word that **should** have **granted** my body **control**.

I vividly remember thinking "did he not hear me? Did he misunderstand?" while I could hear my heart racing so loudly I could practically keep count of each beat.

I remember my mind escaping the room while my voice felt as it was suffocated and brought to silence. My worth was defined by his words, his decisions, HIM.

I remember listening to the stories told by others, brave enough to share. Explaining to me the details of the prison they were forced into.

I remember feeling so much anger while I would listen to the destruction that someone was capable of bringing. Even through all of the anger that their experiences would bring my heart, I still found myself feeling selfishly, grateful I had no personal experience with that source of hurt. I was naïve enough to think, what all of us frequently find ourselves believing, "that will never happen to me".

I had a list of strategies in my head prepared just in case something like that ever would... Thinking that would actually be enough to prepare me if or when, I would be forced join all of the others that have been introduced to this kind of pain. I was wrong. I was wrong to think I could ever be prepared for something that felt so dark. I was wrong to think I would ever find myself immune to the epidemic our society has become way too familiar with.

The truth is ? there is no possible way to prepare you for someone taking complete control of your body. There is no possible way to because we were not designed to ever have to. Every survivor's story is written differently. Every person's dictator looks different and sounds different.

I remember one night being so angry that I took the chair that he bought me, out of my closet and began to rip it apart. Hoping to feel a sense of relief by having something tangible to destroy. Watching all of the pieces that were placed inside of the cushion rip apart. It was not until I sat back and stared at the destroyed furniture, that I realized I was merely looking at a representation of myself, without even realizing. I was that chair, everything that used to bring me comfort internally, had been ripped out and destroyed by the hands of another. I was ripped open and used as someone's instrument to deal with their own pain. I was completely exposed.

I recall looking at myself in the mirror and asking myself "Why do you hold a heart that cares so much inside of a body that seems to care so little?" as if I was to blame, as if I asked for this to occur. I contemplated falling into destructive behavior just so I could feel something, anything. I spent so many nights in the bath tub crying for so long that the water turned cold. As the water turned cold I started to as well. I felt broken. I felt beaten and bruised. I felt shameful. I felt like a stranger to my own body and at times I still do. I hated the idea of my body being handed over to someone who pleased himself in thought of being able to operate and control it.

But I am not here today to describe what my manipulator looked like or spend time explaining what his voice sounded like. I am not here to spend time allowing his presence to over shine my life like I have done so many times before. I am here to stand here as a representation of what it looks like to survive, to finally start to conquer this battle.

As much as my heart aches at this realization ? I know I am amongst others that understand my words on a very deep level and feel a connection to all of them. Allow my next couple of words to speak directly to you.

You are a survivor. You are a warrior. Your body still shines just as beautifully as it did before. Your purity is not tainted or dulled, just because someone swindled your body into feeling like it has been. Your story matters. Your voice deserves to scream as loud as your lungs allow. You are not weak. You are strong enough to find empowerment within yourself again. You are surrounded by the most perfect love. You are loved. You are not someone's property. You are God's greatest project.

I want you to close your eyes and remember a time that you stared a piece of abstract art or any type of painting... And remember how hard your eyes had to study each detail so your brain could attempt to understand what the overall message was. Do you remember finally being able to connect with the painting once you caught the description of it? Do you remember how your understanding or connection of the painting potentially differed from others? Each participant within the group describing the painting differently, each catching its beauty in a different way. Now I want you to envision yourself turning around and putting yourself in place of the painting. That painting is your testimony, one that God, the artist, only truly understands. When you allow yourself to trust your artist and put your testimony on display ? you allow others to set their eyes on it and connect with the beauty. Your testimony is God's art being put on display in his gallery. Your painting is one that he is proud to hang, so you should be proud to be displayed. That is why your testimony should never be silent. If you conceal your portrait from the world you silence the artist that was trying to display it.

I want to tell you that I get to wake up each morning and not be reminded of it, that I spend days forgetting, but unfortunately I cannot. What I can tell you is ? God allowed me to begin to forget the labels and price, I had written on my skin, and replenish my worth. He did not only replenish it, he expanded my view of it. He reminded me that I serve a father that is magnificent and that as his child, his creation, I was made to be as well.

Throughout my process of healing I have learned a very valuable lesson. God calls us to love those who hurt us twice as much, because they are in a place where they do not recognize God. I have started to learn that if I choose to serve the God that loves me and never fails me, that I need to love

his entire kingdom as he does... Which includes the one who caused me pain to begin with. God does not choose for pain to enter our lives, but he does provide us with a voice and a community to help shoulder it, help us be reminded of how unfailing Gods love is and will always be. If we decide to accept our label of being a Christian, then we must vow to love like Jesus loves us. I know introducing the idea of learning to love those who hurt you may place anger in your heart or sound unappealing, maybe even unimaginable. But I want to remind you that God is not asking us to befriend those who agonize us. He is asking us to open a place in our heart to have hope for their salvation. Hope for their chance, to enter the kingdom. just as we would beg for someone to grant the same upon us. That is where you find your healing, that is where you get to feel your victory.

My Precious Rainfall

I have always processed and viewed love as something that is transactional. Spending all of my days withdrawing more than I had to deposit - leaving myself with nothing to save for the rainy, challenging days. The vicious, almost satirical, cycle of desperately searching for replenishment in the very thing that depletes me. Like drinking from a well filled with toxic water.

Then I found you, the precious rainfall my internal drought was so thirsty for.