

q'm achy. i need more dope. i'm rest-  
less. I need more dope. i'm anxious  
i need more dope. i can't do anything  
i need more dope. i can't sleep. i can't  
eat. i can't work. i need more dope.  
i need more dope. i need more dope. my  
will is paralyzed. i need more dope  
both q'm make a se. i need more dope.  
i can't stand my friends. i need more dope.  
i can't stand myself. i need more dope.  
i can't write. i need more dope. i'm alive.  
i need more dope. i need more dope. i'm  
blood sweatin. i need more dope. i'm  
gimmy neck there. i need more dope.  
i can't think. i need more dope. my limbs  
give up. i need more dope. i've got no money.  
i need more dope. i've become a lost  
sledded more dope. i'm miserably alone. i need  
more dope. i'm stuck. i need more  
dope. nothing is happening. i need more  
dope. i need more dope. i need more



# I need more dope.

Heroin,

Addiction

&

Recovery

A collection of personal experiences,

poems and artwork inspired by the

struggles, losses and triumphs over

the heroin epidemic and addiction

affecting the Seacoast, NH and

Southern ME communities.

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July 2015

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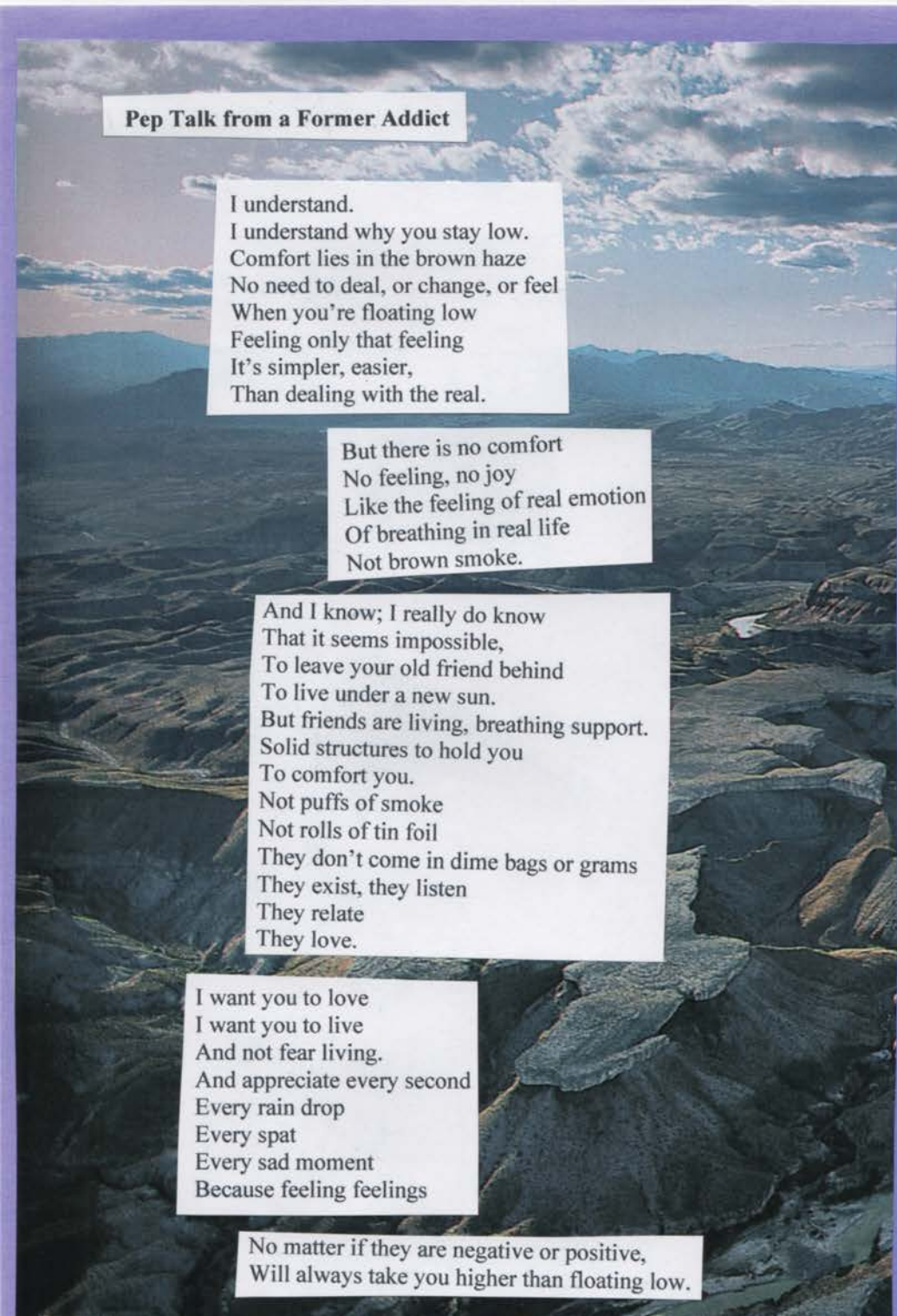
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### Pep Talk from a Former Addict

I understand.  
I understand why you stay low.  
Comfort lies in the brown haze  
No need to deal, or change, or feel  
When you're floating low  
Feeling only that feeling  
It's simpler, easier,  
Than dealing with the real.

But there is no comfort  
No feeling, no joy  
Like the feeling of real emotion  
Of breathing in real life  
Not brown smoke.

And I know; I really do know  
That it seems impossible,  
To leave your old friend behind  
To live under a new sun.  
But friends are living, breathing support.  
Solid structures to hold you  
To comfort you.  
Not puffs of smoke  
Not rolls of tin foil  
They don't come in dime bags or grams  
They exist, they listen  
They relate  
They love.

I want you to love  
I want you to live  
And not fear living.  
And appreciate every second  
Every rain drop  
Every spat  
Every sad moment  
Because feeling feelings

No matter if they are negative or positive,  
Will always take you higher than floating low.

## RESOURCES

Suicide Prevention Hotline  
**800-273-TALK (8255)**

24/7 Treatment Referral Line  
**800-662-HELP (4357)**

Disaster Distress Hotline  
**800-985-5990**  
text **TalkWithUs** to **66746**

<http://www.samhsa.gov/treatment/index.aspx>  
**Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration**  
**1-800-662-HELP (4357)**

<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/bdas/index.htm>  
**NH Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services**  
**603-271-6738**

<http://www.drugfreenh.org>  
**Drug Free New Hampshire**

<http://nh4youth.org>  
**NHCBHC**  
Holds family support groups throughout the state for  
substance abuse issues  
**Susan- 603-668-4859**

<http://y12sr.com>  
**Yoga of 12 Step Recovery**  
Open to anyone dealing with their own or other's addictive  
behaviour



## I am Cody's mother

I found out by mistake that my loving, witty, smart, beautiful son  
Was doing heroin. HEROIN, NOOOO  
At home during our yearly neighborhood New Year's Eve Party  
His best friend told me , Cody can't donate blood, she said, not because he is sick  
**it's because he's doing heroin.**  
HEROIN .....My whole body **shook, I screamed, I cried, I loved**  
I was sick. My beautiful, wonderful, loving son had made the biggest mistake of his life  
I walked around like a zombie

My son, my baby, ohhhhh  
"Don't worry, Mom, I am off it now, I am fine...I can beat this"  
Cody went to a Psychiatrist,  
Told his deepest, darkest secrets, his fears, his paranoias, his nightmares  
**He shook, He screamed, He cried, He loved**  
They gave him drugs to get off drugs

## I am Cody's father

I also found out about Cody's Heroin addiction on New Year's Eve  
That moment changed my life.  
From the beginning, Cody assured us that he was done with it  
He was getting ahead of it; he was not going to let it get him  
And of course, we all wanted to believe it.  
And it was very believable.  
I have never known any one person to have so many Friends, colleagues, fellow artists and musicians  
Who admired him and sought his advice  
I thought by those great numbers of friends  
That he would certainly be ok  
He seemed to live his life in devotion  
To causes and ideas bigger than himself  
I always knew Cody was so much smarter than me.  
We were very proud of him and everything that he meant  
To the community that he lived in and loved.

Cody had overdosed one time in Sandown  
I found him on the floor

### I shook, I screamed, I cried, I loved.

First responders were able to bring him back to life  
He and I spent the rest of that day in the hospital  
On the way home that evening  
I stopped the truck half way up the driveway  
Pulled him out of the truck, punched him and kicked him  
And told him that I hated him for bringing heroin into our family  
And I told him then, that I would never stand for it  
For the next four years, I never saw him under the influence  
But had my suspicions and worried constantly  
I thought he had kept it out of our family  
Until that call April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 that he had overdosed

### I shake, I scream, I cry, I Love, I LOVE.....

I felt like I had died to, and in a way a part of me has.



## the story

My mother is the only one who remembers what my brother Joe was like before. She says, *He was gentle. Quiet. Sad. He used to stare out the window all day, waiting for his father to come home.*

*That was all he ever asked about, she says, when his father would come home.* Her hands rest in her lap, the gold ring that she bought herself after divorcing her first husband shimmers in the firelight. I have watched her hands age around that ring, shaped in the image of a woman's face, surrounded by flower petals.

Long before I was born, she saw it shining in the window of a shop. She was walking with her two small children just a few weeks after leaving him.

*I liked it, she says, so I bought it, even though I had almost no money, and it cost a hundred dollars. I made a promise when I put it on, to take care of myself, take care of my children.* She remembers my brother that day his small hand swinging in hers. His fingers wrapped around the ring when it was new.

She has told me this story before. *Joey's blue eyes, much bluer than yours, or Joey's curly hair, so much softer than your sisters'.* His age, the circumstances, these things change but the moral stays the same:

*He didn't used to be like this. He didn't always kick the dog, or steal from me, he wasn't always*

*a drunk. Sean, he used to be my little boy.*

She is the only one who remembers.  
She keeps looking out the window, waiting.

I tell her, Mom, he is 47 years old. He's been a junkie since he was 17. It's over. He's not coming back, but she's an old fool and there is nothing I can say.

This is the story that I tell my lover over dinner at a restaurant in Africa—because I recognized the ugly shine in his eyes when a painter that we met on the street, offered us powder made from the blood of flower petals.

*When it is good, the painter said, the drug, she is a woman made of smoke; bluer than a baby's eyes and sweeter than a mother's sorrow.*





### coming clean

The fact of it:                    the waft of purple smoke,  
the mysterious blue wound in the arm.

When finally it comes, the muttered,  
*sometimes, I shoot dope,*

it is like a window opening inside their cupped hands  
letting spill a golden light from in between their fingers.

Realise that this need for the unseen    something  
is what you loved about them,  
pulled through its own sleeve. The darling's face,  
turned inside out.

It's like you've let yourself in through a rusty gate,  
walked a path to ring the sweetest bell.  
You have fallen for a voice you heard,  
speaking slowly on the other side of a door.

You've asked to be invited in, but when the latch springs free,  
the house is empty, and there is nothing inside.

There never was. The voice is yours.

It's like you've always known.

It's like the door is standing in a field,  
and there is no house after all.

It's like—

I'm sorry. It's not like anything.  
It's like nothing.  
Nothing else.

### method act

This is not the house that crystal meth built—  
but it is the one it decorated.

Christmas lights, half burnt out, plastic flowers lined with ugly dust,  
all the kitchen tiles pulled up, shattered;  
records, books, meticulously alphabetized.

It's 2 am when I arrive, and you are vacuuming the carpet  
with a fierceness I reserve for sex.

speaking of sex—you have permanently set up  
a black studded leather sex swing in your bedroom,

and this is where I sit, kicking my legs back and forth  
like a little boy at a lunch counter while I watch you, while you hold  
the flame beneath the glass pipe, breathing in the smooth white smoke  
that slithers from its mouth. It clouds your eyes, until you're lost.

I suppose, if I were a good friend, that I would scream.

Or run out of the room, or say something self-righteous  
and storm off to a hotel.

but I'm poor. I need a place to stay tonight, and I have missed  
you.

So I look down at my shoes and I say,

*hey, you know you can't do that forever, right?*

Forever is a funny word isn't it?

defined by its inability to exist in real life.

like a perfect drug. a compassionate conservative, or

Pegasus—the winged horse that sprung from the severed  
head of Medusa, a monster so terrible that to look upon it was to die  
but who was once a woman, so beautiful that the gods were jealous.

J—you were beautiful like that. Your hair, a crown of fire, lit up  
for the eyes of jealous gods, a lion roaring for the things you  
loved,  
and how that drug ate holes in you. Your heart, a withered sail. Cannon  
fodder

wilting on the wind.

It doesn't really matter, in the end, whose fault addiction is.

Blame you, blame my silent mouth.

Blame the cold and heartless diamonds  
full of bliss, their melting into fog.

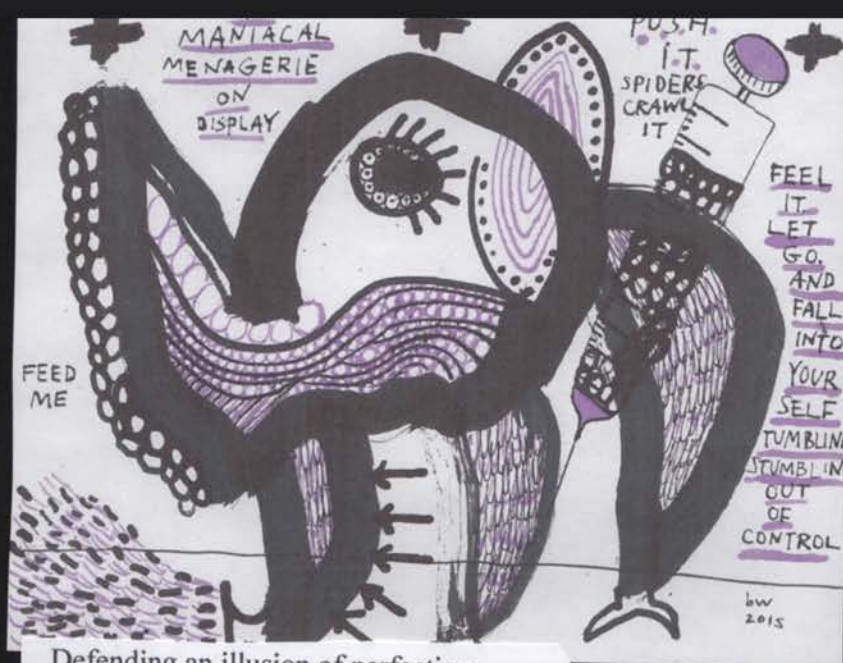


TUESDAY- TWILIGHT, Time is a doomsday clock powered by false hopes and false truths. REcurring in a circle that seems to dance around me, taunting and snickering at my lost senses- i'm encapsulated in nostalgia and a longing for days and moments that flickered and were gone before I had a chance to ask what the point was. THE EARTH has rotated in a traditional manner, with Father Sun, The Dictator, glaring behind his back. My fan is spinning at full speed, producing proverbial tundra throughout my lair, as I am sprawled out, motionless, afloat on a sea of glowing moisture. Excreting from every fiber of my being, forged from insecurities and fear.

REPETITION STARING in the face. Subtle relief in the form of a shower, water boiling my skin- pushing on to the point of climax to grasp some kind of feeling of tranquility. Heat exhaustion cleans my clock and i'm out cold on the floor, dripping wet, naked, unconscious. My body looks like that of an 89 year old retired business man living out his last days on the beaches of Morocco. WRITHING IN my mattress, I seek comfort and displacement from my distorted paradise through fantasy and escapism. Masturbation disconnects my nerves briefly, but once again.. "HONEY, I'm home!" Muscles set ablaze with a purpose and bones shot through with cement, cannibalism sets in and a desperate hunger overcomes my chance of survival. The jaws of life clutch to the flesh on a rescue mission, searching for the last sign of being.

THE OVERWHELMING MARK OF EXISTENCE IS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND  
SNUFFING OUT THE FINAL GLIMMER OF LLIGHHT

## MORBID REFLECTIONS



Defending an illusion of perfection

my dragon sits in a cage of shit  
self constructed by ego and unwillingness

she prefers **hurt** because she understands it

'why would anyone want to be your friend?' she says

'why not just DIE, you'll never escape me!'

she laughs

And everyday I slay her

I refuse to feed her a favorite snack of resentment

I take away her **fuel** and I watch her wither

until she sits on the deep pain only my solar plexus remembers

I tell myself 'little by slow, we'll get there'

one day at a time, she shrinks in size and the welts wear thinner

The last time I saw him, I said, 'you also have a dragon'

warned him not to feed it

lots of water, less stress and pleaseplease no more **needles**

He said 'I want to be able to speak with normal people if I quit'

Repudiated demon, it ate him

**We are monsters**

There is no escaping this

**We are animals and like all animals we have a nature**

The only option is to **acknowledge** the beast or die listening to fiery lies

Some part of me wants to listen to her siren song

'climb out of your skins where you belong'

And yet again, I choose to chip away at the scales of self hatred my dragon wishes I'd wear

Just another day without a drink and I'll remember you, friend



## THAT LONESOME WHISTLE

I was burrowed underneath my desk with a grey plush blanket and depleting rations of Old Crow. Returning to my chair would have meant confronting the blank document that by 2:00 the following afternoon needed to be a five-page paper on Puritan literature. The trouble was that I hadn't read any Puritan literature lately, and what was more, I had inexplicably lost my talent for bullshitting. I had put in eight hours of concerted effort that day, and had one incomplete sentence to show for it. And so, sometime after making myself a T.V. dinner, I gave up on writing and retired to my floor-bar for the night.

I had been there for two hours or so when the AmTrack shot by my building, faintly shaking the wall that I was slumped against under my desk. Suddenly there came an intense awareness of the refrigerator's low, anxious humming; of my neighbor shouting slurred words at his cat; of the dry, stale air that circled around me. And then the shrill whistle. Right on cue, the grainy nightmare reel began, projected first onto the wall opposite me, and then onto the back of my eyelids when I closed them. *Outside, my feet are straddling the rail, and I think about how they won't be mine anymore.*

My eyes were still closed tight, which did nothing. I finished off the Crow and rolled the bottle across the floor. There was no defense left. *My fists are clenched tight when the light appears in the night.* The booze had failed me like it did sometimes. I wasn't even drunk. *The speeding hulk of iron is maybe a football field from my face. This face that won't be my face.* I heard the whistle blow once more, now far off in the night, and I started to cry.

In the past few weeks, a vague germ of some impending doom had bloomed into a vivid, recurring vision in which I stood on the tracks behind my apartment building, waiting to throw myself in front of a train. These scenes were almost always accompanied by panic attacks. And the racing heartbeat, the labored breathing, the shaking—all lent to these visions a measure of legitimacy. I didn't want to kill myself, but I was becoming convinced that I would, and that I was powerless to do anything to prevent it. I knew I could reach out to friends or seek professional help, but I also knew that this would be an affront to the idea of self-reliance that I always sought to live by. At the bottom of everything, I hated myself for being so unsatisfied with what I realized was a perfectly fine life. At least, there wasn't much wrong externally. So whatever psychic shit-storm I had gotten myself tangled up in was my responsibility to work out.

Even if I could've brought myself to ask for help, I was sure that I wouldn't have been able to begin explaining what was wrong—I hardly knew myself. For years, an entourage of pet anxieties and persistent doubts had dogged my steps, but they had become so unremarkable as to lose their individual qualities. It seemed that everything that had ever bothered or worried me, down to the last petty grievance, had congealed into a furious fog that colored my whole life. Unloading my burdens upon a sympathetic listener or even seeing a psychologist, I thought, would require a formula something to the tune of "I'm upset because x." And I was petrified that any x I was capable of articulating would sound inconsequential to foreign ears.

After all, it wasn't my present troubles, but those that were sure to come, that had driven me under the desk that night. But by then the boundary between current suffering and dread of the future had been worn so thin as to lose all visibility. Minor blemishes in my days and weeks routinely would swell to tragic proportions when I began, as always I did, to consider them as harbingers of my life's great and final crisis. I had no concrete idea of what this crisis would look like. All I knew was that it would be a swift, irreversible defeat. And that it was coming.

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In the morning I decided on a preemptive measure to ward off further grief. The first step, it seemed, was to quit my job at the Writing Center. Here I was, an utter failure of a writer, and I had the audacity to *help* other students write papers? At least if everyone knew that I sucked, I wouldn't have to get so worked up about keeping it a secret. I only wished then that this had occurred to me sooner, and I could have saved myself the fall from grace.

The walk from the study room to writing center gave me all of thirty seconds to work out how I was going to explain myself to Molly, my boss. If I framed my decision to quit as feeling inadequate as writing assistant, I worried that she would try to talk me out of it. She might try to reassure me that I was doing a fine job, or maybe offer to work closer with me until I regained my confidence, or any other combination of kindness and encouragement. That wouldn't do. I would have to say that I was struggling to keep up with my schoolwork. This was true enough. Only, I would have to get another job to keep up with rent. What if she ran into me at my new place of employment? She would obviously see that I had lied to her. Before I settled any of this, I was in the center, standing in the doorway of her office.

"Hey Molly," I said. "Do you have a minute?"

"Sure, come on in," she said, gesturing to the chair beside her desk.

I had always found Molly to be a ready and sympathetic listener. She was young—maybe five years older than me—and while I hadn't shared much about my personal life with her before, I always had the sense that I would be comfortable doing so, which puzzled me. Some of my closest friends I didn't trust so readily.

"What's going on?" she asked when I sat down.

I couldn't answer her immediately, so I just sat there, avoiding eye contact, trembling before her. I tried twice to begin, but everything was suddenly scrambled and dizzy. The only sound in my mind was the shrieking of the train. *My fists are clenched tight when the light appears in the night.* I tried with a deep breath to get ahold of whatever it was I had come here to say. I could feel myself starting to cry again. I wouldn't let myself do it, not here. But after a minute I knew I had to say something.

"I think I...I think...."

I was choking on some new idea, something wholly unexpected. The nearness of Molly's visible concern; the irritation under the spot of beard I'd been tugging at; the train; the hangover; conventions of Puritan poetry; an empty bottle of Old Crow rolling across the carpet...

"I think I'm an alcoholic."

And with that, I fucking lost it.

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I had my first drink at 13, alone. A six pack of Bud Light I had stolen from an old man in our building who paid me to bring in groceries sometimes. I think I had picked up from TV that drinking was for being tough, like those mustached detectives with their bourbon. I almost threw up after three beers, had one more, and then did throw up. I absolutely loved it. I felt cool and wished someone was there to see.

It was two years before I drank again. I was at a friend's lake house, and we helped ourselves to his uncle's vodka. The rush of a new confidence electrified me. My social life was finally starting to take off, but I still had a hell of a time being around people. My doctor had me on anti-anxiety meds, which helped some, but not in the immediate way that getting drunk did. My whole life I had labored under the conviction that I was somehow inherently worse than everyone. Less interesting, less attractive, less intelligent, all of it. Drinking was the only freedom from these thoughts I had ever experienced. People liked me when I was drunk. I liked me.

From the first, I drank to get as drunk as I possibly could. Anything short of that seemed like a waste of resources. I threw up regularly, often on purpose so that I could drink more. Blacking out, too, was pretty frequent—maybe one out of every three or four times I drank. But all the while I was staying out of trouble, hiding behind good grades and the pretense of innocence. Mostly I was hiding from myself, from old, persistent doubts and fears.



I didn't run into any real trouble until college. The friends I had made early on got tired of babysitting me when we drank together. As a drinking companion, I was a guaranteed shit show. People expected it from me, and I liked that. I was the wild card—every social circle needed one. At least that was how I saw it, and I took it for granted that my friends would too. Once, a friend found me passed out on his couch, choking on my vomit. He had to punch me in the chest until I coughed it all up. He was the first person to cue me in on the fact that these misadventures weren't always so endearing.

But that was all fine. Soon after that, I made a revolutionary discovery. Just as being drunk could make me feel at peace with others, it could also make me feel at peace with myself. I could cut out the middleman, and drink away the need for company entirely. This freed up all sorts of time...mostly for more drinking. A few weeks into my second semester, I stopped going to my classes.

Around this time, a run in with Old Crow landed me in the hospital with a BAC of .29. I woke up to a subpoena, a catheter, and a hangover that would take me three days to fight off, but by the fourth night, I was flying high with the Crow once again. A few months after that, I passed out at a party, and was carried into the host's bedroom to sleep it off. Later, a couple looking for somewhere to fuck stumbled in and found that I had pissed the bed. Despite these and other mishaps, it never occurred to me that I had a drinking problem. I was just a bit sloppy.

Over the years, however, my powers of self-justification were wearing thin. It helped that I had returned to UNH and had more or less gotten my shit together. But it didn't change the fact that my pet anxieties were catching up to me. I needed booze more than ever just to keep myself from counting all the ways I could end up dead in a gutter. I was becoming more reckless, too. I kicked off 2014 by crashing my car into a tree, drunk. For years I had been proud to say that, for all my careless bravado, I had never driven intoxicated. And yet, by the time of the accident, driving drunk had become a habit I had settled into without a flinch of inner-conflict. By this point, I had given up entirely on justifying my drinking. It no longer occurred to me to try.

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But I wasn't thinking about any of this when I walked into Molly's office. I had come to her to quit my job, not to break down and admit that I was an alcoholic. Whatever it was I had planned to say was muddled in confused desperation. Now was the great crisis I had been waiting to meet for months, and finally I could put a name to it—a name that hung from the corner of my mouth, refusing to be swallowed. The familiar impulse to flee from vulnerability hijacked my attention.

Molly sat there before me, speaking softly in shades of sympathy and kindness that startled me. She told me I was going to be okay, and I resisted—to believe that, and then to be fooled, seemed a recipe for sharper pain. I heard myself responding in fragments, mostly variations of “I’m losing my damn mind and I’m scared.” To think of the long nights ahead, alone and sober, paralyzed me. *Outside my feet are straddling the rail, and I think about how they won't be mine any more.* I wouldn't be drunk that night.

For forty-five minutes she talked me down from each thread of fear that I was hell-bent on following to its morbid conclusion. Her steady patience and unwavering willingness to listen gradually tugged me out of the wasp nest that my mind had become. Still, I wasn't entirely prepared to believe that I would come out of this okay. I couldn't shake the certainty that I had reached my bitter end. That tomorrow or tomorrow or tomorrow would find me in a grave or an institution. And then she reached for a pad of post-it notes.

“Here's my address,” she began. “Luke will be home at six. Head over if you'd like, and he'll make you dinner. I'll be there a bit later. I'll call him now so he knows you might be coming.”

Luke was her husband, whom I had met only once in passing. I couldn't see myself having dinner with a near stranger in the state I was in, but I was surprised to find that a part of me really wanted to. I was still afraid of people and deeply suspicious of giving away glimpses of my torment. Still, I was pretty moved by the offer, though the confusion was still too thick right then for me to understand just what it meant, or would come to mean: that I didn't have to do this alone.



When I returned to my apartment later that afternoon, I found out just what going it alone would look like. The first thing I did was to empty my bottles into the sink before I changed my mind. Watching the drain swallow the last gulp of my whiskey and then my wine, something fierce within me rebelled against my own actions and demanded retribution. Suddenly, it all seemed ridiculous. No way was I an alcoholic. And then I was walking out the door and heading to the corner store to restock the bar beneath my desk.

To get there, though, I had to cross the train tracks. *The speeding hulk of iron is maybe a football field from my face. This face that won't be my face.* I froze. It occurred to me that picking up wine wasn't a decision I made. It was action without thought, movement without direction. Always had been. "I'm an alcoholic."

Those words had stumbled out just a few hours before, and they couldn't be taken back. Not only from Molly's ears, but from my own. I was trying to doubt them. Trying really damn hard and failing. If I was to keep drinking I'd have to do so knowing what I now knew and could never un-know. What a buzz-kill it all was! I couldn't bring my self to keep on toward the store. And yet I couldn't go back home.

"This is it," I thought suddenly, "This is how I get plowed over by a train. Stuck on the tracks, like a tied up Damsel in a shitty old Western movie. I couldn't drink more and I also couldn't quit. This is how I'm going out: not with a bang, but a great pause."

And then I remembered the folded post-it note I had put in my wallet. I looked at my watch. 6:20. Luke would be home.

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I get nervous when people compliment me on the "courage" or "character" I've displayed by getting sober. I know they mean well, but I can't identify with these things. In the first place, it wasn't bravery, but fear, that got me sober. The desperation I experienced that week is a feeling I don't want to know ever again, and that has been the most consistent motivation to stay clean. I've come to see that fear can be a great ally in recovery if you let it. Desperation betrays a fierce attachment to life; it is the recognition that that attachment is being threatened.

In the second place, I owe so much of my recovery to the people around me that stepped up to support me when I couldn't support myself. Old friends who called to check in on me. The friends I met in recovery who shared their experience, strength, and hope, and showed me that I wasn't alone. A former drinking buddy of mine had gotten clean a few months before, and was getting involved with A.A., to which I never would have been able to drag myself without his example. I have no doubt that A.A. saved my life. Even if I could have quit drinking on my own, I would have known nothing about the business of living sober without the program as my guide.

So there's a long list of people I credit for my sobriety above myself, and topping that list is Molly and Luke. I did go to their house for dinner that night, and many more nights after that. Without flinching, they welcomed me into their home and their lives. With unconditional support, they've navigated me through every storm I've faced in my sobriety. They've become family. In those first few weeks, they ferried me back to the land of the living, reacquainted me with human solidarity.

It has been nine months since my last drink. I've had my share of dark days since. Like many alcoholics, depression and anxiety have been faithful collaborators with my disease, and they can still put me out of commission. But it's more of a fair fight. I have my own collaborators. I see a therapist to work towards untangling the knots of warped thought patterns brought on by eight years of active alcoholism. At meetings, I hear stories of recovery that never fail to shine some light on the road ahead of me. And when I get into a rut, there are numbers to call and friends to lean on. Even these simple gestures of vulnerability would have baffled me not so long ago.

There was no dramatic moment of transformation, no violent exorcism of my demons—they are still alive and well. There was only the sensation of having dwelt for many years in a forest, and having one day stumbled into an open field without realizing it. I saw the whole sky and felt the freewheeling breeze and was very aware that I didn't hear the train.





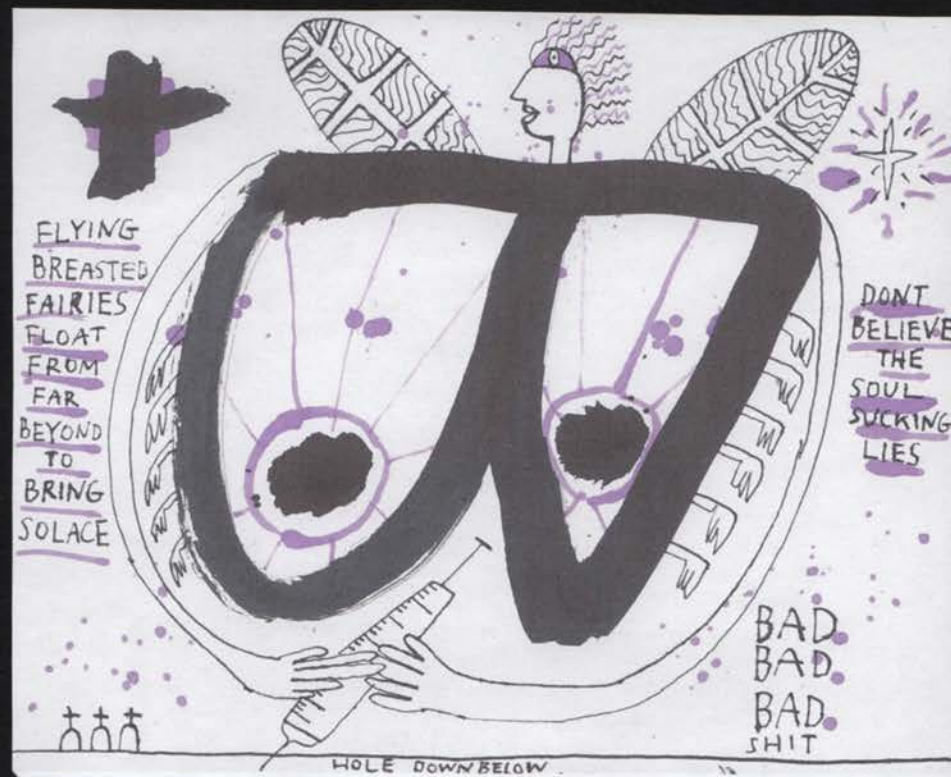
Trust me - i know what  
i'm doing!

# *Don't Sentence Your Demons to Death*

Don't sentence your demons to death.  
Coax, coddle, comfort,  
Seduce, and swaddle  
Them to sleep.

Until their borrowed bodies collapse  
into one,  
slow  
breath.  
Until the only thing left  
Is a soft purr.

Until you smile,  
When you hear these gentle vibrations  
That used to fill your body  
with shit.





## I am Cody's brother

When I first heard about his new problem,  
I was certain he could beat it and everyone was  
overreacting.

The more I learned about heroin addiction,  
I became increasingly less certain.  
Cody went straight from college to abroad,  
I didn't realize why at first.  
I didn't understand how bad it was  
Until he came home that first time.  
**I denied, I rationalized, I cried, I loved.**

"But still, he's too smart for this, he can beat it."  
I thought. The next time he came home,  
We brought him to Maine  
To "get away from that stuff."  
But "that stuff" was everywhere.  
He was so honest, even in his lies, about using.  
I loved believing him,  
Because the alternative was horrifying.  
Then one night, after a PERFECT family dinner,  
We bid him goodnight;  
And he accidentally destroyed himself.

Amongst the police, firefighters and EMT's...  
**I shook, I screamed, I cried, I loved.**

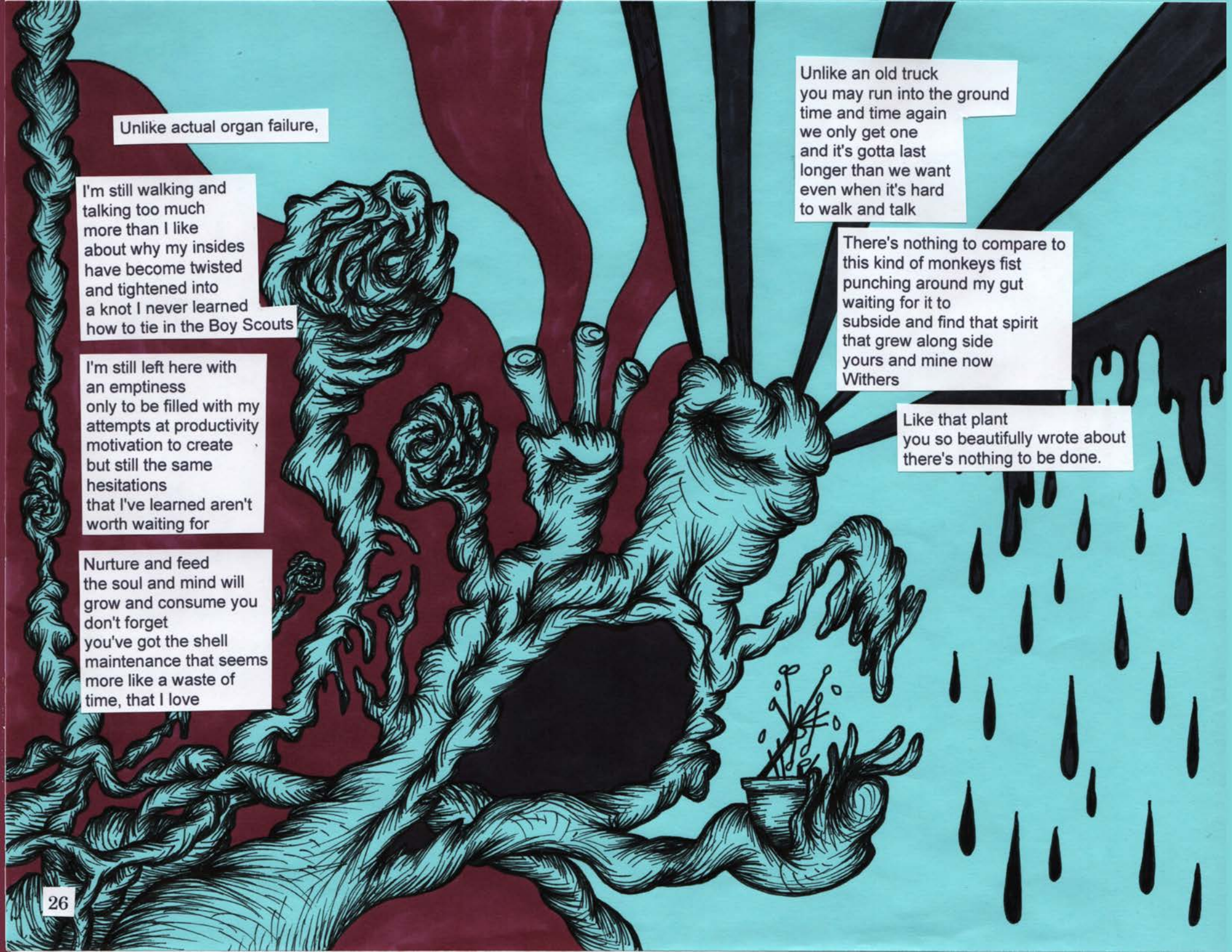
## I am Cody's sister

I Found out my baby brother was using heroin on  
New Year's Day  
It wrecked me.  
I thought for sure this drug would eat him alive.  
I proceeded to write  
A lengthy and terrifying plea letter to him.  
I was in shock and the letter was scary  
To read and for me to write.  
It was raw and scathing,  
The questions and feelings were harsh.

**I shook, I screamed, I cried, I loved.**

His addiction went on for years  
It seemed to me he kept it at bay  
But I knew he struggled daily  
And would never be truly happy on his own.  
We continued to be pen pals  
I was happy to hear of all the adventures,  
Music, friends and artistic opportunities  
He was able to create.  
He lived 2 lives  
His internal life was the one that was addicted  
And looking to be dragged to the depths of despair.  
This was what was breaking my heart.  
**I shake, I scream, I cry, I love.**





Unlike actual organ failure,

I'm still walking and talking too much more than I like about why my insides have become twisted and tightened into a knot I never learned how to tie in the Boy Scouts

I'm still left here with an emptiness only to be filled with my attempts at productivity motivation to create but still the same hesitations that I've learned aren't worth waiting for

Nurture and feed the soul and mind will grow and consume you don't forget you've got the shell maintenance that seems more like a waste of time, that I love

Unlike an old truck you may run into the ground time and time again we only get one and it's gotta last longer than we want even when it's hard to walk and talk

There's nothing to compare to this kind of monkeys fist punching around my gut waiting for it to subside and find that spirit that grew along side yours and mine now Withers

Like that plant you so beautifully wrote about there's nothing to be done.



I changed all the following names:

I have never consumed heroin, but have been offered to partake or buy many times. This has happened at basement punk shows, living room parties, college dorm rooms, and once in a highway rest stop bathroom. I just finished serving on a grand jury in New Hampshire where an overwhelming majority of the indictments were heroin possession charges. Hearing 100+ heroin charges in three days has challenged me to rethink about my own feelings and experiences. Its prevalence and danger are incredible and need to be addressed. I will never ever forget the first time I was offered heroin though, because I was 11 years old.

In elementary school I made friends with another boy in my class, Sam. Sam and I were both overweight kids who didn't really get along with our peers, and we both liked Lord of the Rings and playing video games. Before long, we were having little sleepovers almost every weekend. I especially liked going to his house because his parents didn't have many rules for us. We could stay up as late as we wanted. They would rent movies for us and they bought us lots of soda and snacks. Sam's dad was in the military and wasn't home often, and I think his mom was just too busy to be keeping an eye on us. He had two younger brothers, Eddie and Nathan, and they were both a handful.

So Sam and I spent time together often. We remained close once we went to middle school. One Saturday in the fall of 2004 I rode my bike to his house. He was waiting for me on his front porch. When I walked up to him he reached into his pocket and pulled out a small baggy with some thick brown powder inside. He said, "I've been wanting to show you this." I asked him what it was and he told me, "Don't worry about it. I think you'll like it. It'll make you feel good." I'm not sure if at that age I had even heard of heroin. I had no idea what he had in that bag but he was making me uncomfortable and nervous so I just decided to leave.

When I got home I told my dad what had happened and he explained to me what it was Sam had. He told me not to hang out with Sam anymore and let him know if anything else happened. I don't know if he should've called someone. I think he was more concerned with protecting me. To this day I have no idea how an 11 year old gets heroin. I'm 22 and I don't know where to get pot and I'm still fairly afraid to walk into a liquor store. But the point is that Sam had heroin and I was pretty sure he was going to use it.

On Monday at school he wasn't acting the way he usually acted. I remember noticing that he was having a hard time walking around. He seemed like he was slurring some of his words. I sat with him at lunch that day. Halloween was coming up and Sam asked me if I wanted to come over his house and go trick or treating with him. I told him I wasn't sure if I really felt like it and next thing I knew he had punched me in the face. I fell out of my chair and hit the ground and he was above me, fists raised, ready to strike again. I put my arms up to cover my face but nothing ever happened. A teacher had managed to grab Sam before he could do anything.

The next few weeks at school I watched his behavior get more and more erratic and bizarre. He was getting simultaneously violent and complacent. We stopped talking. I didn't know who to talk to. I had lost a friend to something I didn't even understand. Thinking back on all this with the knowledge I now have about drug use, I can't believe his parents weren't noticing this. Did the teachers notice anything? Maybe they were all doing something about it. I have no way of knowing.

About three weeks after the punching incident he called me and asked if I wanted to come over and hang out. It seemed out of the blue and almost suspicious but I thought maybe I could go hang out with him anyway. Maybe we could play video games and drink soda again and just be friends. It would be important to note that I was discovering punk rock and had bought an Anti-Flag shirt that read, "A-F Army: Too Smart To Fight, Too Smart To Kill"

I rode my bike over to Sam's house and we talked for a bit and then we were playing video games as if nothing had changed. It was great. Eventually he told me he wanted to go into the basement for a little bit. I asked why and he was sort of avoiding answering the question. I followed him downstairs. It was clear that his parents never went down there, because all of his drug equipment was visible. I saw a couple small spoons and I what I recognized as syringes. Again, how does an 11 year



old get all this stuff? How did he not overdose? There was something else going on that still remains a mystery to me.

He started shuffling things around and getting ready to do what I know understand as, "shooting up." I was feeling uncomfortable again and I went upstairs into his living room and waited for it to be over. About 45 minutes later he wandered upstairs and collapsed on the couch next to me. I sat there for about 15 minutes before he said, "Why won't you try some?" At this point his younger brother Eddie walked into the room. He said, "Greg won't you try it out with Sam and I?" I realized that both Sam and Eddie were using. Eddie was maybe 10 at this point.

They kept asking me why I didn't want to use any. I didn't really have an answer because I don't think I really even understood what they were asking me to do. I think I would've given into their pressure if it wasn't for their dad. God bless their right-wing-staunch-

I stopped talking to Sam after that. I did some more research and really started to understand what was going on. I was hurt. In retrospect I should've tried to seek help for my friend, but I didn't know how. I don't think my parents knew how. Part of me wanted to believe that his parents would fix the problem, but if their dad didn't notice that they were high almost immediately after they shot up, I couldn't see him putting the pieces together. A few years later I read in the paper that Eddie had died in a drug deal. I was 16 when that happened. Eddie had just started high school and had been stabbed in the chest four times during a disagreement over payment. Sam dropped out of high school and I never heard anything about him after that. Their youngest brother, Nathan, got arrested and charged with possession with intent to sell. To my knowledge he's still in jail.

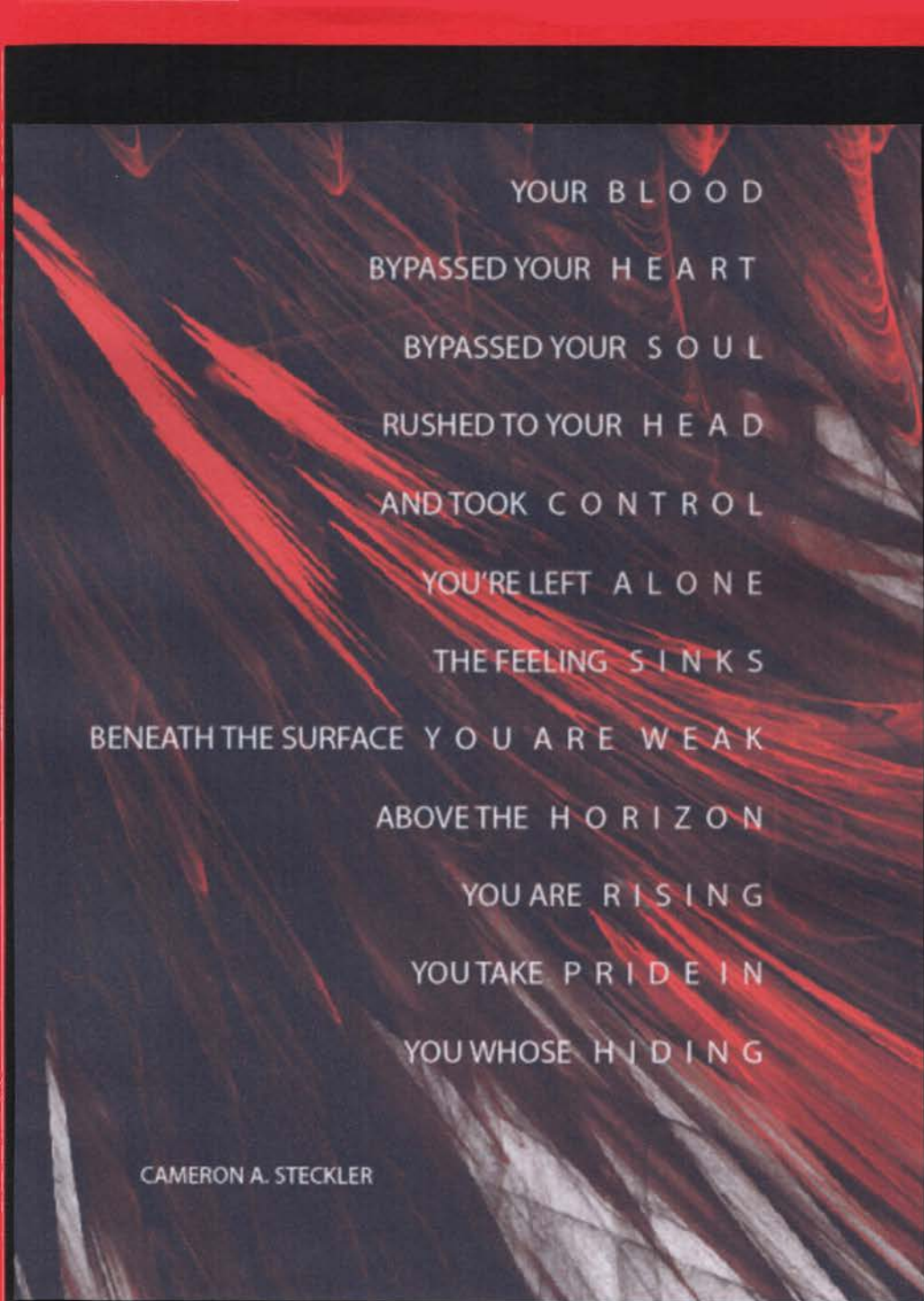
Part of me is still upset over losing a friend. The nostalgic center of my brain misses Sam before he discovered drugs. I realize now that I should have done more to help him and I have to live with the knowledge that I didn't do anything. Now I know it was silly to sit and wait for his parents to do something. I am so lucky that I felt nervous and went home. I am

so lucky that I decided to wear the shirt that his dad would hate. I'll never know how Sam found drugs. I'll never know if the way his parents raised him drove him to it. If I had started using as well I could've ended up dying in that deal along with Eddie. This has always all colored my views of heroin in a different way. I am sometimes unsure of how to talk about it because there were so many factors at a really young age for me that could've led me to addiction. I only hope that someday I'll have the chance to help someone in the way that I couldn't for Sam and his brothers.

-Greg Nahabedian







YOUR B L O O D  
BYPASSED YOUR H E A R T  
BYPASSED YOUR S O U L  
RUSHED TO YOUR H E A D  
AND TOOK C O N T R O L  
YOU'RE LEFT A L O N E  
THE FEELING S I N K S  
BENEATH THE SURFACE Y O U A R E W E A K  
ABOVE THE H O R I Z O N  
YOU ARE R I S I N G  
YOU TAKE P R I D E I N  
YOU WHOSE H I D I N G

CAMERON A. STECKLER

**"We are no longer isolated and alone in self-constructed prisons"**

I started 2015 in a full blown suicidal crisis. Ended up in the hospital after I told my roommates that I was going to kill myself with a 12 pack of PBR and some pain pills or with a kitchen knife to the wrists. I felt like a loser, a failure, a fraud. I was convinced that I should no longer exist in this world. My roommates insisted that I give them the pain pills I was going to take and I handed over all the kitchen knives and razor blades that I had been eyeing for weeks. I ended the night vomiting up 10 cans of PBR, three grav bong hits, countless cigarettes and my self-respect into a paper bag on our living room couch at 2 in the morning.

The next afternoon, on January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015, my friends intervened and brought me to the hospital. I was so scared and embarrassed. I was still convinced that I needed to die, but having the safety of my friends and getting the medical attention that I've desperately needed for at least ten years showed me that that I deserved to live. Somehow it shocked me that all these people wanted me to live. We ended up in this room with a single bed, a TV and a chair. I was so exhausted and hung-over and starving after not eating more than one meal a day for over a week and vomiting up all the nutrition I had in my system. My best friend held my hand as a doctor came in and asked me what had happened the night before. I told her I got really fucked up and was planning on killing myself. She asked me how often I drink and smoke, and I wasn't sure how to answer because I was so used to lying to myself and others about my substance use. I didn't realize until I stopped drinking that I was drinking almost every day for three and a half years. I was so used to taking it day by day in survival mode that I failed to notice that I was blacking out and throwing up and crying all the time, because it felt so normal for me. I was so used to waiting around to die because then, and only then, would the pain, anxiety and profound sadness cease. The ultimate release. The doctor asked me if I drink to black out and I answered with a lie. I told her I had thrown up from drinking a few times before, but in actuality, I had lost count of the times I had violently vomited all over myself, or in a toilet bowl, or in a mixing bowl meant for making cookies, or on the side of the highway – all because I wanted all the thoughts and feelings to drown out for a little while.

I left the hospital four hours later, after getting some food and water and promising the doctors and counselors that I would keep myself safe at home with my friends and I would stay with people as much as



possible. The doctors advised me to not drink or smoke at least until the crisis passed. Even upon leaving the hospital, I didn't think I had a problem. But I wanted to live, I wanted to fight for my life. I wanted to learn how to live, rather than just survive.

Four days after the hospital, I pulled myself together enough for a job shadowing event in Boston and on the way there, I stopped at a random CVS to get protection from the five degree weather outside, and bought a journal. That journal became my safety net through this terrifying time, and I've since had two more notebooks. To outline my process of recovery from alcoholism and learning coping skills for combating major depression, PTSD, and borderline personality disorder, I have chosen to give readers direct quotes from my journal entries over the past five and a half months. My intention is to demonstrate the challenges and triumphs of recovery after being so sick for so long. I feel the selected quotes show a story of my recovery in a way that I feel a narrative piece could not. I hope that this piece will give others hope and show that it is possible to get better. It is a living, breathing process.

**January 9:** – "I honestly wish I didn't exist today, I woke up this morning absolutely panicked and it hasn't stopped since."

"I feel like everyone hates me and wishes I would die."

"Embarrassed that I'm so sick and I'm so delusional and I'm so anxious. I'm embarrassed that I let myself be vulnerable."

"This neurosis I'm experiencing now must be good for something and I know I will get healthy again. But I also want to die...I feel like my brain is going to implode."

"I just want to scratch myself until my whole arm bleeds."

"All I want to do is get drunk and take the pills, who would even care? I know that they will be devastated and feel so guilty and heartbroken if I die from this, but I just can't keep spinning with my brain on electricity, it's just booming with thoughts."

**January 10:** One of my best friends cut and dyed my hair today.

"I feel so cleansed and free and supported. I feel like this new hair style is really affirming of how I want people to perceive me. I feel beautiful and strong and resilient."

"The last week has been a huge wake-up call and learning experience. I learned how much of an impact I really have on people and that people care about me in a deep meaningful way. I honestly believe that I finally have the loving family community I have always hoped for. And I know

why my trust in people is so fragile. It's because of years and years of profound loneliness, dysfunction and secrets."

"He [my roommate] is worried that I'm just in denial of my feelings and that I'm just going to go back to all the same behavior and that I drink to forget about all my feelings, which is sometimes true, I suppose."

"I don't want to keep going through these cycles of feeling good and safe and comfortable then overusing weed and alcohol and then feeling like shit and then using them again because I feel sad and alone or because I want to be blind or void of all the intense emotions. I want to be strong. I want to be healthy."

"I can't just keep sweeping all my feelings under the rug. I haven't drank in a week since the night I almost took my life and threw up in a paper bag. I want to drink again eventually, but I need to be level headed right now."

"I feel so much more hopeful that things will actually get better now. I can do this. I know I can. I know I'm not alone. I know that I am loved and that I am worth it. I know that I want to live. It's going to be really hard to battle all these intrusive thoughts and the family shit and the body shit and the bullying shit and the sexual assault shit, but I know I can do this. I just need to take it one step at a time towards stability."

**January 11:** "I'm here and I'm alive."

**January 12:** "I don't know if the medication will do anything to help. I'm so scared I'll become more depressed. I'm worried about dependency, which I already have dependencies that I've developed on my own accord. This just doesn't seem real that I'm finally getting the help I need."

**January 13:** "Honestly this haircut and color has given me so much more confidence in my personhood and gender expression than I ever thought possible. I feel like a fairy, which contrary to popular belief doesn't mean to appear or be femme or feminine."

**January 14:** "Going to the grocery store and trying to decide what to buy is often a stressful place for self-judgment and hatred. I feel so embarrassed about literally anything I buy or eat and I know it's unhealthy but it is very real."

"I just feel so incredibly scared of being a burden on people and I'm scared it's all going to come creeping back."



**January 15:** "I don't feel like journaling today but I know I should."

"I haven't drank in twelve days and it's honestly a lot more challenging than I thought it would be."

"She [my fourth grade teacher] saw potential and intelligence in me that I couldn't see...I think she wanted me to use writing as a tool to combat all the noise of everything that was happening and I think she knew I needed something to give me a sense of purpose. I am so grateful for her."

**January 16:** "I have no idea what's going to happen now. I'm so exhausted and scared all the time and I don't know how I'll ever get back to 'normal'...I feel so ashamed to be here and to be alive."

"I know the rational part of my mind is the part that knows that people love me and don't want anything like that to happen but the delusional part is the part of me that tells me that killing myself is something I need to do. That split in reality is what makes it getting up every morning so very difficult."

"The book was \$18 which I can't really afford to spend, but it's a lot better than spending it on alcohol, which is what I would justify my frivolous spending on just a few weeks ago, so it's better to spend the money on a book that might help me rather than a few nights of blacking out so I don't have to deal with destructive emotions. I need to face them head on or they will win."

**January 20:** "Honestly a year ago I was directionless. Honestly I couldn't imagine what my life was going to be like and it made me just want to kill myself but I'm glad I didn't."

**January 21:** "I feel like this week I don't have many feelings at all and I'm not sure what that all means. I either feel intensely and truly and passionately or not at all."

**January 23:** "On the bus, just left my first psychiatrist appointment with a diagnosis of major depression and PTSD."

**February 1:** "Holy shit, its February suddenly. A lot has happened this week and I'm in denial about a lot of shit right now. And I'm sorry I've been so spacey and out of control and out of touch with this journaling thing. And I'm sorry that my first extinct is to apologize."

"Went back to the psychiatrist and left with a prescription and I haven't picked it up yet. Maybe I just won't pick it up. I don't know if I want to go down that road. I feel like a loser and like I'm giving up."

**February 5:** "...wondering if I'm wasting all my time on this earth waiting for something, waiting around to maybe feel better. But what does 'better' even mean or look like? I have no fucking idea."

"I went to my first ever AA meeting on Sunday night...I don't know how committed I am to all this. I still want to drink and party and have fun and be social and to be out of my body and headspace for a while. But everyone says if I go back to drinking, it will only get worse...Honestly I don't really care about feeling better or planning for the future. I just don't care anymore."

"I know my depression makes me selfish. I know that I'm fucked up. I know I'm self-destructive. But I'm also realizing that my self-destructive ways affect other people too and that makes me feel more guilty and powerless. I hate planning for the future when I can't even plan for today."

**February 6:** "I've been thinking more about moving to Portland. There's a lot of queer and sober people."

"I just feel so apathetic and terrified and like ripping out all my hair and ripping myself out of my skin."

**February 20:** "I know I haven't been writing in here as much as I probably should, but I've been doing a lot of productive work towards getting better even if it doesn't feel like it."

"Today, we climbed through this three feet tall snow bank to see the ocean. It was incredible and the waves were so intense. The water was the prettiest dark blue and the sky was bright blue and the sun was shining even though it was fucking freezing."

**March 11-13:** Made a list of "Safe foods I can buy at the grocery store."

**April 1:** "7:20 am. Wake up, heart beating fast. Sweat, panic, don't worry about the clock. Don't worry about the time. Under the covers, hands shaking. This goes on for about an hour. In and out of dreamland. In and out of reality. Panic. Feel like crying or dying or something."  
"8:22 am. Starving. Need to eat something but worry about how I don't deserve it."

9:00 am. I fucking hate myself. I need to get up. Fuck I need to get the fuck out of this house. I'm always behind and get a late start because I'm always so fucking sad and panicked.

11:30 am. Panic panic panic, maybe I'm fucking dying, maybe we're all dying, maybe that would be better."

12:30 pm. I guess the doctor's receptionist has been there for 25 years and remembers when I was born. She has blonde hair and lots of jingly bracelets. She is nice and familiar. She said she liked my hair cut."



**April 14:** "Yesterday was a very good day...Last night I read my work in public for the first time, I was shaking in my chair but as soon as they called my name, I knew it was something I needed to do. I read my piece calmly and deliberately, and people responded with agreement and shock and support. Everyone clapped for me a long time after my turn and it felt really good and unreal and I was really proud of myself. And I'm proud of the progress I've made in the last three months."

**April 24:** "Today was a good day. Woke up at 9:45 calm and feeling safe even after weird dreams. The sun was shining and the sky was blue but it was quite windy. I was wearing one of my basic outfits. Docs, baggie khakis, maroon shirt with the collar, my jean vest and my wolf sweatshirt. I feel like a bad ass."

**May 5:** "I'm worried about the party, because I'm worried about not being drunk in front of a bunch of alcohol."

**May 12:** "This year has been very challenging and rewarding, and I've learned so much about myself this year, and I'm proud of myself for the progress I have made. I spent the fall horribly paranoid and on the verge of self-destruction. Now, I'm content with being alive. I can't say, "I'm happy," and I don't know if I'll ever get there...As much as I've been craving drinking lately in a severe way, I'm glad I stopped even though it is very difficult. I still miss that part of me, but I know that part of me is reckless, self-destructive and often careless."

**May 13:** "I would drink and drink and party as much as I could, even creating my own parties when people weren't feeling it. I felt so angry, so very angry and self-destructive and that I shouldn't be alive because I felt like such an intrusion on people's space. I used drinking as an escape from the constant mental noise that permeated my headspace. Just constant booming loud thoughts. I was so scared. Who am I kidding, I'm still so scared and honestly in many ways being forced to face things head on instead of stewing in my head full of debilitating paranoia and hiding behind the numbing mask of alcohol is one of the hardest things I've ever had to do."

"I am proud of myself for being sober for four months even though it is very difficult and I never thought I would crave it this bad. It's not even a physical craving, I just want rip myself out of my skin and not be there for a while. I want to dance and dance and fuck and not give a fuck. Even though throwing up sucks, I miss getting so drunk. When I was eighteen, I told myself I would never drink and I don't know what eighteen year old me would think of me now. I feel so ashamed."

**May 14:** "I deserve to allow myself to have fun. I am not a failure. Went to AA tonight and I got my four month chip, its bright purple just like my hair."

**May 17:** "In Portland, went to two meetings with my sponsor. One of the meetings was her home group which is a feminist AA group. It was really eye-opening. This was the first meeting where I wasn't one of the only young women. I usually feel safe at meetings, but a little out of place. I felt like I belonged there, finally. I'm so happy to be here. And I wish more than anything that I could stay longer."

**June 3:** "Its five months today since I last drank and I never thought it would be a permanent thing but I'm starting to realize that it might have to be. I'm not the type of person that can drink casually. At the time I stopped, it was literally out of self-preservation because I was so, so low."

**June 8:** "Today is my 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday and I am very proud of myself. During the past year, I have taken charge of my life. Last birthday and this birthday are like night and day. To be honest, I can't even remember the last three years-worth of birthday celebrations because I was so drunk. My birthday party this year reaffirmed my confidence in the power of community and of sober, healthy living...I felt special and supported and I could feel that everyone there was proud of me for the transformation and actualization I have made this year. I'm five months sober and five months pulling myself out of the void, or the rabbit hole - whatever you want to call it. I am a survivor, a queen and a fairy."



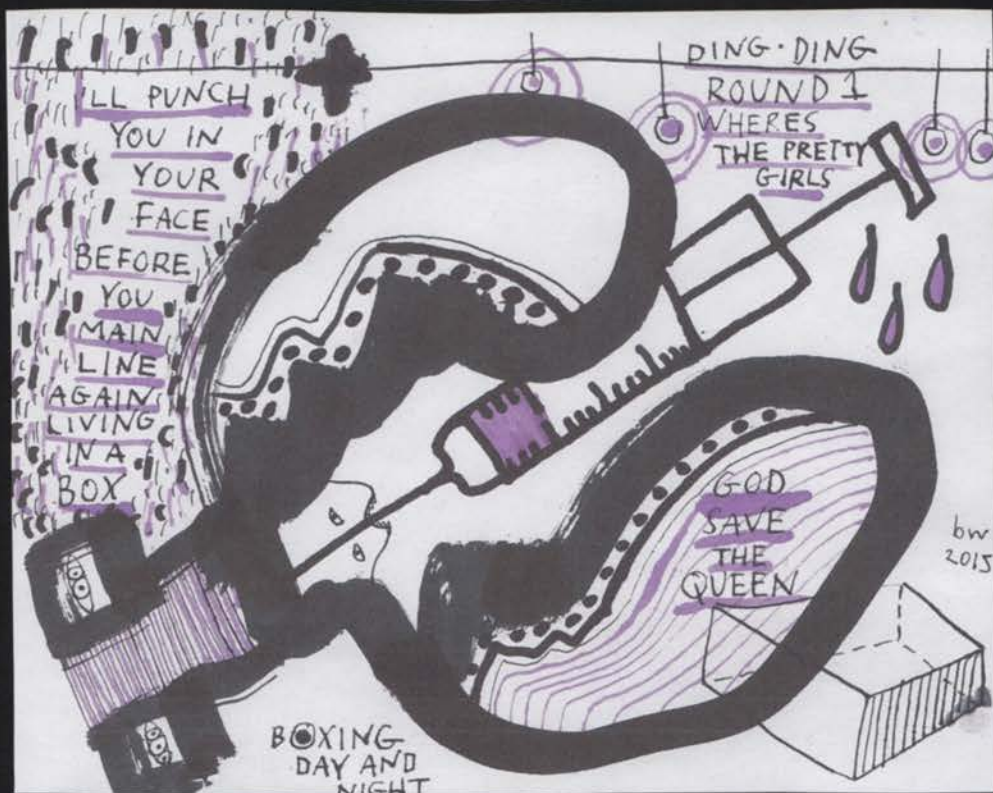
### Heroin / Love / Hate

There was a neon sign above my brain  
That said "!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"  
The first time I snorted Heroin.

There was an endless, open ocean  
In which I weightlessly floated upon  
The first time I injected Heroin.

/

There was a wet, mangled corner  
Inside of my very broken mind  
(darker than the deepest black)  
Where I obsessed about ways to obtain money and if I could just use one  
more time and no one fucking understands and how will I sleep or eat or  
live through this  
The last time I withdrew from Heroin.



### Addiction / My Only Honest Moment

amidst it all –

having sex with a convenience store owner for cash,

living inside of my mom's silver 2003 Ford Taurus,  
ingesting twelve different prescribed medications,  
selling crushed up vitamins to fellow patients,  
shooting up outside of the NA meetings,  
writing countless books of bad checks,  
dropping out of two colleges,  
and attempting suicide --

i had a single moment of truth:

my co-dependent and enabling father sat across from me at Steak N' Shake

(to buy me another dinner after he found me in another parking lot)  
and finally asked, "Why do you do this?"  
and I finally replied, "I don't know."

### Addiction / How Did She End Up Like This

The most shameful moment  
was angrily coming to  
in the Babies R Us parking lot  
while a stranger was screaming  
and slapping me in the face  
to get the blue out of my lips.  
"I'm fucking fine!" I yelled  
(I wanted to be left alone  
and enjoy the little high I was able to obtain)

His very pregnant wife  
looked at me with horror  
and bewilderment and fear  
for a child  
that could end up like me.



## Recovery / Dear Reader

In the depths of addiction,  
I could not imagine a life without heroin.

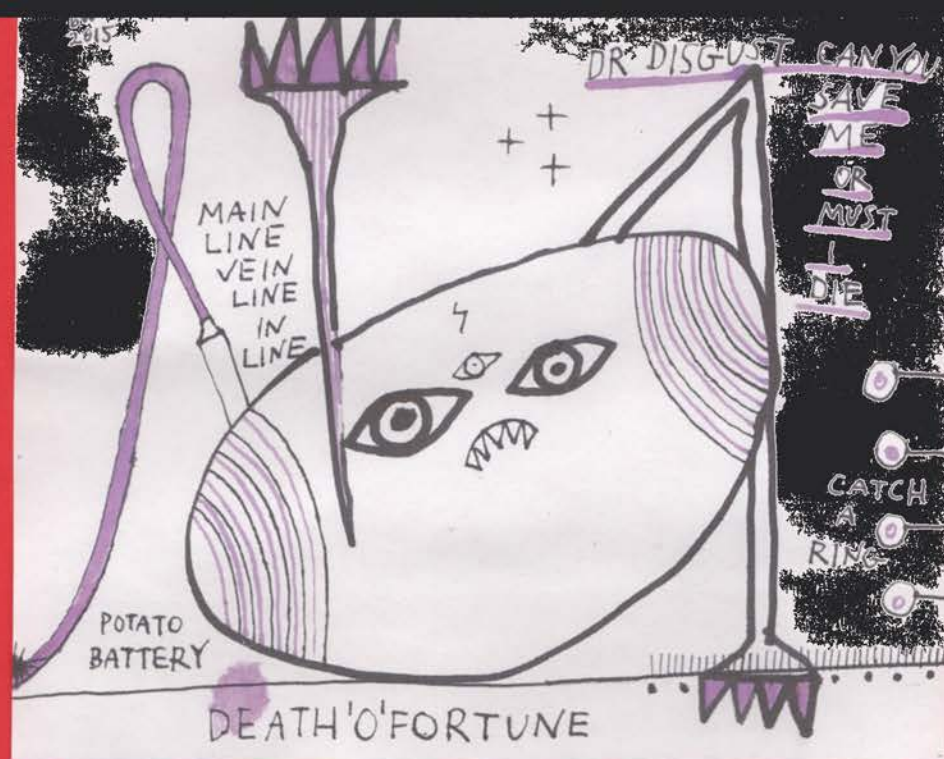
I could not imagine waking up and not feeling like shit.  
I could not imagine forgiving myself for all of the damage I had done.  
I could not imagine that other people would be willing to love me,  
regardless.

I want you to know that recovery is possible.  
A complete, fulfilling, wonderful, recovery.

In the depths of addiction,  
I could not imagine a life where I went twenty-four hours, let alone five  
years, without dope.  
I could not imagine that one day I would simply purchase groceries and  
pay my bills.  
I could not imagine that I would have the incredible privilege to work  
with children with special needs.  
I could not imagine being honest, reliable, and looking people in fucking  
eye.

This is the secret: there is no secret.  
Recovery is possible, and there is no single right way.  
I tried various different ways,  
I relapsed.  
I kept trying.  
I did not give up.  
I waived.  
I wanted to give up.  
But I saw someone living a life that looked quasi-normal and thought,  
"There's no way that person was ever within ten feet of fucking heroin."  
But they said recovery was possible. So I asked them for help.

Recovery is possible.  
Ask for help.  
Even after you burn every single damn bridge,  
Reach out. Call that number. Wait for the bed at detox. Go to a program.  
Dry out. YOU WILL SURVIVE. Don't let some other substance be your  
temporary crutch. Process all of the drama, spite, hate, resentment, and  
sorrow inside of your brain. Practice compassion. Learn to love yourself.  
Make amends. Whatever it takes. Start over. You are never alone.



Heroin Kills. It kills your best friend, your offspring, your mother, your teacher and the kid you rode bikes with down to the corner store when you were in 7th grade.

For me, it was my best friend, the same kid I rode bikes with in search of Wacky Packages and Pixie Sticks. The friend who can never come back. The friend I wish I had been there for that time, 35 years after seventh grade when she called me....sad and feeling obviously like shit. I didn't know she was using....I mean I didn't really think about it. We need to think about it. We need to understand that there is more and more the possibility that they could be using....that this world has become too tough for them. It's too tough for all of us from time to time. And heroin is around, and people will feel like shit...and they will use. And we need to help them. We need to help that woman to understand that how they feel....their pain, is impermanent. It won't last forever. And if she doesn't understand that....we need to convince her that it really is true. Everything in this life is impermanent, even pain. Everything except for leaving this lifetime. That is permanent. Reach out. Spread awareness. Bring it up, and talk about it....and let people know that it's not in the shadows anymore. The 48 year old woman standing in line in front of you at the grocery store could overdose tonight, and there will be no more sharing stories of bikes rides to the corner store. Raise awareness all you can. Be there. Ask questions and help people get help.



**I am Cody's best friend.**

I saw him through his lowest of lows the summer he began using.  
We had the best and worst luck that summer five years ago.  
It drained the life out of him and yet he was still able to give so much to others through art, through relationships, through love.  
He was still that incredibly guy, but heroin pulled at him, always.  
On New Year's Eve, I told his family. I didn't know how else to intervene.  
He said some mean things, he hated me for a long time for it.

**I shook, I screamed, I cried, I loved.**

He was off of it, I saw him withdrawing—  
nightmarish moments...  
I saw him using again, after months of being clean—  
more terrible times...  
We lived together in France for two years—  
An amazing life, full of teaching, exploring, learning,  
where every moment was incredible.  
For most of that time, he was off that terrible poison.  
Through it all, heroin pulled at him, always.  
He had everything in the world, so much talent and energy,  
so many who loved him, so many he loved.

Heroin took the most important person in my life,  
when he had still so much more to do and to be.

**I shake, I scream, I cry, I love**

**We are Cody's family....**

Cody did heroin alone.  
He thought he involved no one else.  
That no one else would be hurt

Mother, Father, Sister, Brother, Friends, Colleagues  
Once they found out about Cody's addiction  
It hurt us every single day. And it hurts every single day now.  
**We shake, We scream, We cry, We love**

**HEROIN DOES AFFECT**  
**OTHERS.... YOU ARE NOT**  
**ALONE....**

**IF YOU USE, GET HELP.....IF YOU DON'T**  
**..... DON'T EVEN TRY IT.**



## Narcotics Anonymous Meetings

go to <http://gsana.org/meeting-search> for a complete list

### DOVER, NH

Keep It Real

**Sunday, 7:45pm**

Wentworth-Douglass Hospital, 789 Central Avenue

Auditorium D Promise of Freedom

**Tuesday, 7:45pm**

Wentworth-Douglass Hospital, 789 Central Avenue  
Second Floor, Auditorium 3

A Thousand's Never Enough

**Thursday, 11:00am**

Triangle Club, 120 Broadway

### ROCHESTER, NH

A New Way of Life

**Thursday, 7:45pm**

Salvation Army Church, 36 Ten Olde Farm Lane

Another Choice

**Friday, 7:45pm**

1st Church Congregational, 63 South Main Street

Clean to Grow

**Saturday, 7:30pm**

1st Church Congregational, 63 South Main Street

### PORTSMOUTH, NH

Dare to Dream Group

**Tuesday, 7:30pm**

United Methodist Church, 129 Miller Avenue

One is Too Many

**Wednesday, 8:00pm**

Crossroad House, 600 Lafayette Road

Enough is Enough Group

**Thursday, 7:30pm**

Saint John's Episcopal Church, 101 Chapel Street (Front Entrance)

## Heroin Anonymous Meetings

Triangle Club, 120 Broadway, Dover, NH 03820

**Monday, 12:00pm**

Big Book Meeting

Jason 603-361-1450

**Tuesday, 8:00pm**

The More Than A Score Group

Speaker/Participation Format

Jason 603-361-1450

**Wednesday, 12:00pm**

No Nodding Nooner

Step Study, Discussion

Mike K. 603-973-6928

**Thursday, 8:00pm**

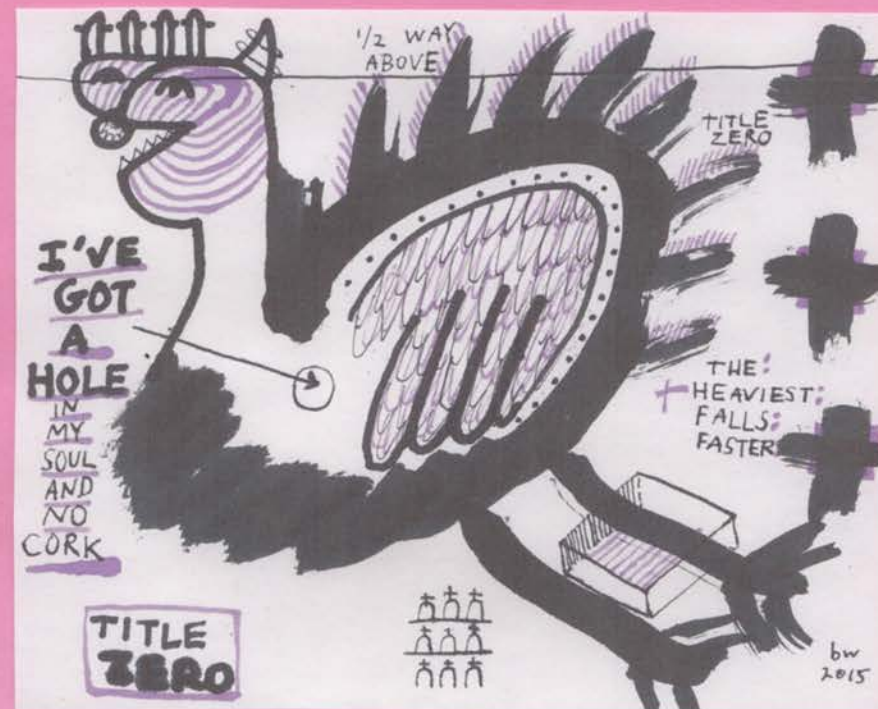
Big Book Study

Mike K. 603-973-6928

**Friday, 12:00pm**

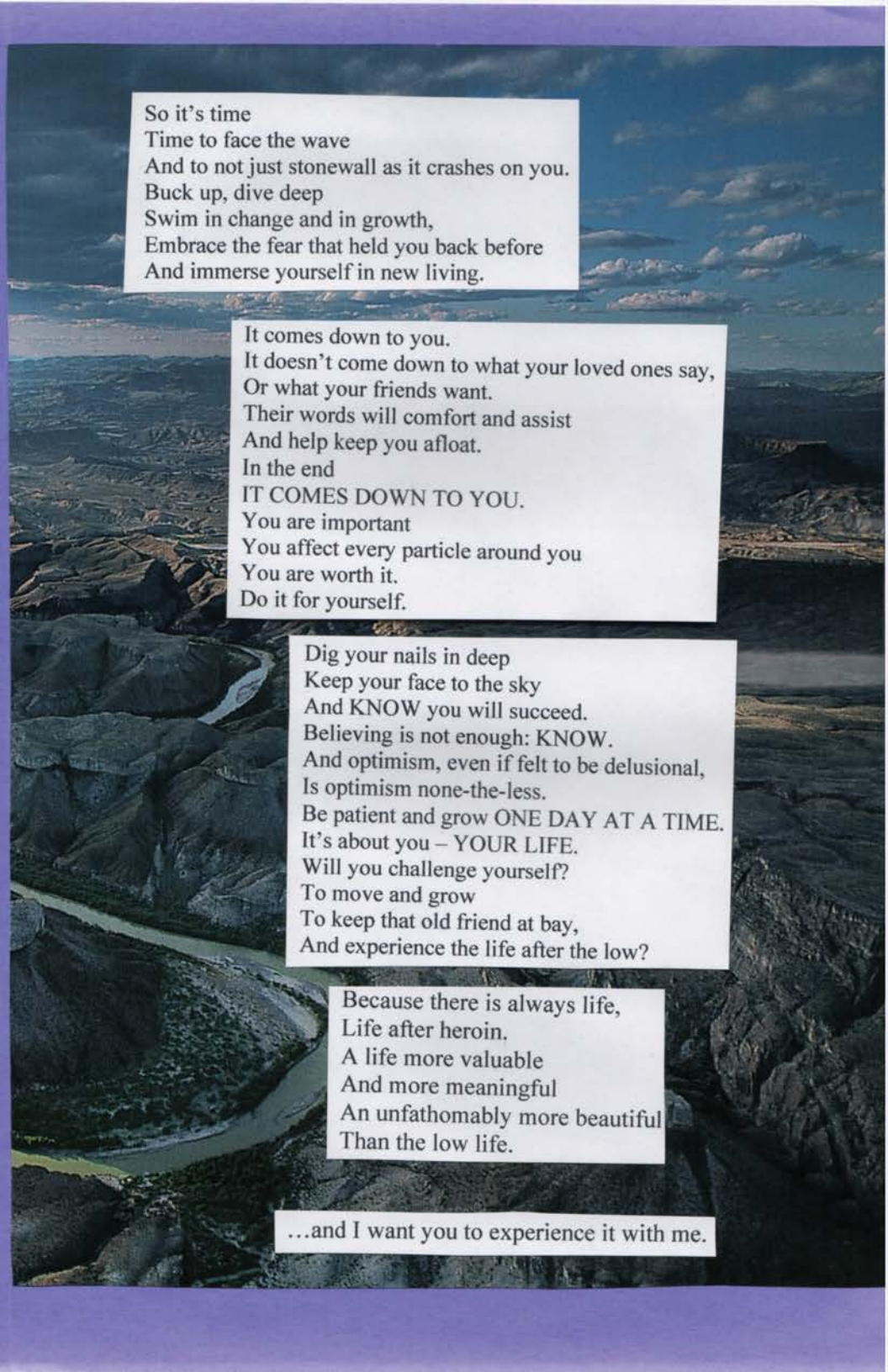
Fantastic Friday

Mike K. 603-973-6928





## RESOURCES



So it's time  
Time to face the wave  
And to not just stonewall as it crashes on you.  
Buck up, dive deep  
Swim in change and in growth,  
Embrace the fear that held you back before  
And immerse yourself in new living.

It comes down to you.  
It doesn't come down to what your loved ones say,  
Or what your friends want.  
Their words will comfort and assist  
And help keep you afloat.  
In the end  
IT COMES DOWN TO YOU.  
You are important  
You affect every particle around you  
You are worth it.  
Do it for yourself.

Dig your nails in deep  
Keep your face to the sky  
And KNOW you will succeed.  
Believing is not enough: KNOW.  
And optimism, even if felt to be delusional,  
Is optimism none-the-less.  
Be patient and grow ONE DAY AT A TIME.  
It's about you – YOUR LIFE.  
Will you challenge yourself?  
To move and grow  
To keep that old friend at bay,  
And experience the life after the low?

Because there is always life,  
Life after heroin.  
A life more valuable  
And more meaningful  
An unfathomably more beautiful  
Than the low life.

...and I want you to experience it with me.

[www.derryfriendshipcenter.org](http://www.derryfriendshipcenter.org)

**Derry Friendship Center, Inc.**

AA Meetings, Drop In Center, Referral Services  
**603-432-9794**

[www.serenity-place.org](http://www.serenity-place.org)

**Serenity Place (NCADD Affiliate)**

A non-profit community based addiction treatment and  
counseling agency in Manchester  
**603-625-6980**

<http://www.headrest.org>

**Headrest**

Non-profit organization that provides addiction and  
crisis support services, focusing on those who can  
not otherwise afford these services. Lebanon, NH  
**603-448-4872x211**

<http://www.refugerecovery.org>

**Refuge Recovery**

Buddhist based outpatient treatment program, started  
by Noah Levine of Dharma Punx

<http://www.bonfirerecovery.com>

**Bonfire Recovery Services**

**800-385-1445**



## RESOURCES

<http://nhtreatment.org>

**NH Alcohol and Drug Treatment Locator**

<http://dovernhtreatmentcenter.org>

**Southeastern NH Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services**

No one is denied admission due to inability to pay  
**603.516.8160**

<http://heroinanonymous.org/HAdover1.html>  
**Heroin Anonymous, Dover, NH**

<http://gsana.org>

**Granite State Narcotics Anonymous**  
**888-624-3578**

<http://www.hopefornhrecovery.org>

**Hope for NH, Manchester, NH**  
**603-421-0255**

<http://nhaa.net>

**Alcoholics Anonymous**  
**800-593-3330**

<http://www.nhal-anon.org>

**NH Al-Anon-Alateen**

For families and friends of alcoholics  
**757-563-1600**

<http://www.theplymouthhouse.com>

**The Plymouth House**  
**800-428-8459**

