

OUR OPPOSITES



How we regard polarities.

Edited by: Ali Publicover

1:11 am

How we regard polarities.

How I regard polarities.

Is it a program? A mentality? Or am I lost? I don't know whether to trust what I discover. I find the polars in everything, everywhere, every place. All throughout myself, and others, I can see our polars too. Opposites, lurking in the shadows, but so blatant to me. People I know, and people I meet, their opposites show me some sort of probability. There are moments of such discovery where I feel mocked, the repetitiveness, the uncertainty, with a sense of delusion. Other moments, It feels found, integral, mighty. A part of me truthfully believes I might be psychic.

I am flooded with polarities, and it's a fucked up sense of glee.

Opposites are controversial ideas, truths that may never be fully recognized, or certain. My head loops, and the circle continues. The polarities within myself are a foundation, with only more room to grow. This is not by any means a complaint, I see and question the world through these eyes, and that's the work to do.

Simplicities, the clothes I wear, the music of the day, in the decisions I make. What things once were, to what they now are, and all in between, there is a timeline. Stigmas of times I have lived, their senses, sounds, tastes, sights, and company, All a vital role of who I once was, to the more recent ones, placed into a comparative position where the questions begin.

My emotions strung between a craving for independence, and a yearning for all-consuming relationships.

Mood swings so drastically conflicting, it all is true, yet I do not spew bullshit.

If you are confused, me too. But sometimes it is as simple as yin and yang, or a black shirt in the morning, and a white shirt in the night. Other times, it can become a white shirt in the morning, and a black shirt at night, and so on, so forth. Evidently, there is no answer booklet to this type of fuckery.

I've always wondered how my pursuit of my own mentality would look, and with polarities as a prevalent topic, I've decided to put a word out to the select few naturally drawn to the matter, and hear what they have to say.

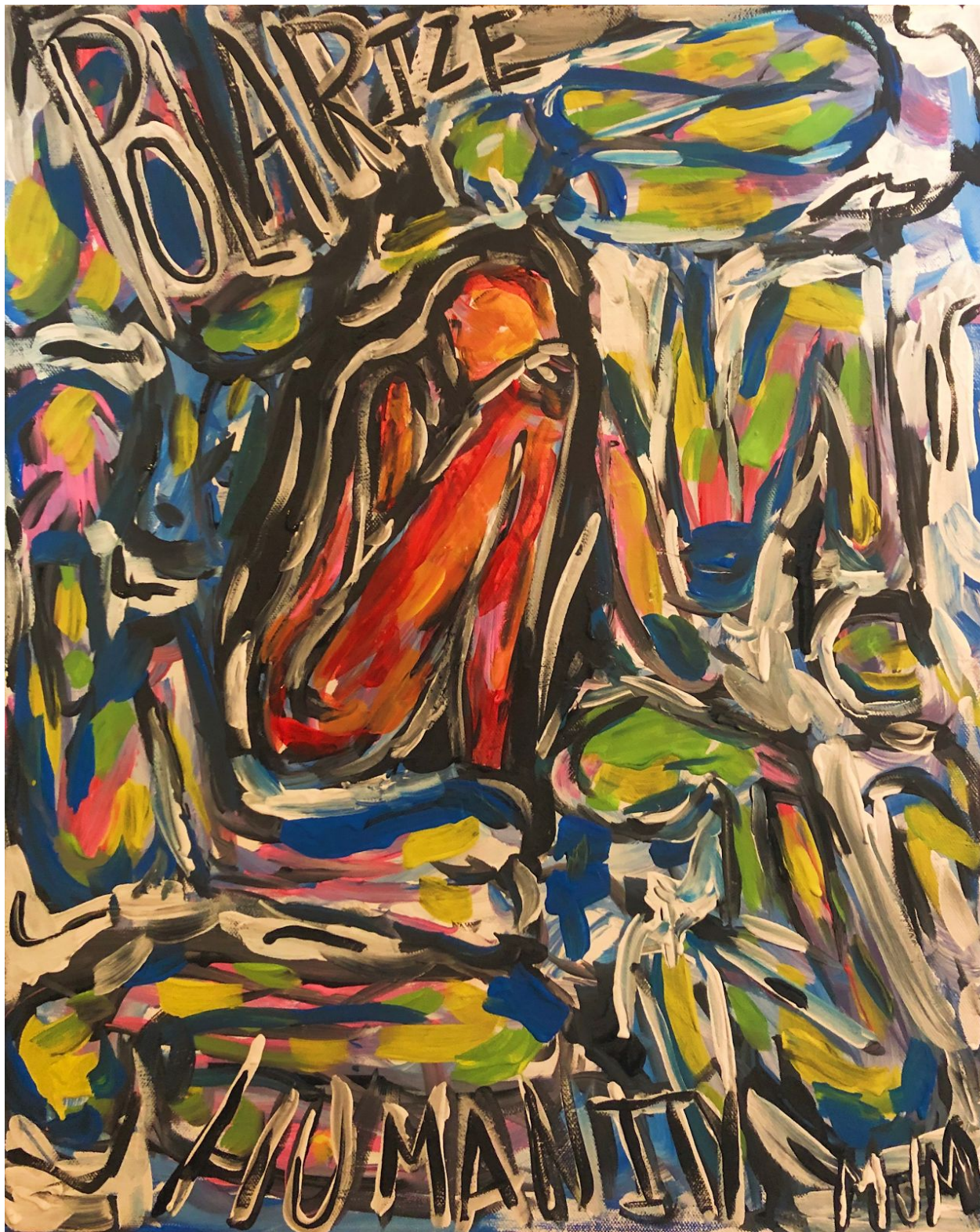
Self deception and polarities are the topics at hand. They race my mind by the thought. I once came to thinking about my own practicality, leading to the question if I ever see 360. I have

been found, and confident in my perception through many eyes. Other times, the involvement of my emotions becomes overthinking, repetition, instability with a lack of grounding. I agree with all of it? Is it possible to play both sides? A bipolar state, so immersingly bipolar, I am partially opposing that madness, which is full time cool.

I have yet to reach the ability to explain my complete intricacy of opposites, and I am reminded of how young I am, that there will be following experiences forever additional to this matter. I am not sure what I am eager to derive from the collective responses.

Welcome to my work, with the help of various artists.

"Polarities", written by Ali Publicover



"My Regards to Humanity" by Joyce McFarland

Duality I

coil and recoil does the void
pulsating all. sporadic unulations
spasms of nothing
chasms infinitely shallow
enter thy exit
come, go, come, go
bureaucracy speeding along in
a vibrating silent metropolis
buzzing of a saw ripping the Ether to pulpy shreds

snowfall on a sweaty summer day
glass of Ma's homemade sweet tea frozen solid

surmountable obstacles avoided by sloth
desires abandoned by greed
starving from gluttony
Epic Minutia
follower-less leader
keyless gate keeper
unfelt punches through self destructive armor
air for choking on
freedoms worth fighting for
captivity worth dying for

Duality II

fire raging in ones gut
whose origin is unknown, but conjecture is allowed
anger and sadness swirl in a beautiful, chaotic dance

fire is indiscriminate, all encompassing
we stare into it, consumed
it all funnels to a point
and with nothing left to burn,
it drips out of every pore like perspiration

...

plip plip...or whatever sound water makes
as it splashes around
in a bucket carried
by a man's determined hand
a sinking
one's soul chained to an anchor
dragging across the bottom of the ocean

to have life taken by its originator
conjecture is not needed

...

what happened to that fire behind your eyes?
did he douse it?
the man with determined hands?
he's not the only one determined
shed your chains,
stoke your flames

"Duality I" and "Duality II" both written by: Niko Noel



"Obsession " by Mairead Morrissey

Right Brain vs Left Brain

My thoughts contradict themselves like waves crashing into each other
One side of my brain talks and the other talks louder
One is mean and one is kind
But which one is right?
They say opposites attract
So maybe that's why my mind feels so bipolar sometimes
"You're beautiful"
"But not enough for it to matter"
"You're gonna be okay"
"Why are you lying to yourself?"
"This could be going well"
"But why would it? They don't care"
I don't know what I'm thinking because it's so hard to keep up
A debate inside my head
I know which one is better
But the other is so goddamn loud
I try so hard to block it out
A battle of fire and water
I am burning myself alive
And a single drop won't be enough to put out an inferno

Written by: Liv Duquette

Breakfast

A diner.

Checkerboard flooring, sleek 1950s Chevrolet decor; a blast from the past. Nostalgia in a time-capsule, some would say. Time stood still in those walls, and some important people loved it.

Especially the Man himself.

He was no stranger to the diner; after all, Heaven was about the little things. If it made someone feel at ease and welcome, He was all over it. Today was a meeting, one which made Him nervous, but all the same long overdue. He was an angel of old, with a new lease on life so to speak.

God dressed comfortably but formal. After all, he knew his old friend's taste in attire. His overtime-ridden facial hair screamed 'Nine-to-Five', but no better way to display himself. He took a seat in a booth, next to the window. He always enjoyed seeing the occupants of his beloved getaway, revered as the best there is for any monotheist. He wasn't sure of what to order for his guest, and out of respect didn't order for himself. With a chime of the door's entry bell, God stood to face the fallen one himself.

"Lucifer, I'm happy nobody panicked at your arrival." He said, albeit a little shaken.

The handsome face, the slicked, black hair.

The fiery eyes, the Devilish grin.

"I'm surprised you want to discuss matters in the first place, God."

"You haven't aged a bit."

"I may have to say the same. Though, you tend to always look like that."

Silence filled the otherwise empty diner as Lucifer strutted his way towards the table, taking his seat without hesitation.

"Coffee?" A young waitress asked.

"Yes, cream and sugar for myself."

"Black, with a spoonful of sugar."

The waitress left only briefly, and returned with two mugs filled with the desired concoction.

"Pancakes, sir?"

"Yes, thank you." God replied.

"And for...you?"

"French Toast, if you could. I've heard it's quite delectable."

She left once more. The air was thick with tension, but it broke as God started his sentence.

"So, how are things in your neck of the woods?"

"Fine, numbers are down a bit. People seem to be getting their act together a bit more."

"I concur, numbers are down for myself as well."

“Why may you think that is? Faith?”

“Something to do with it, I’m sure. But I can’t complain as long as they’re happy.”

The Devil laughed, gagging on a fresh sip of coffee.

“Happy? Please, don’t be so naive. I’ve never seen such torment, I haven’t even had my son yet!”

“You plan to, then?” God’s eyes sparked with fluorescent holy fury.

The laughter lessened. “A joke, God. A simple jest. You know what I see is true.”

God considered it and nodded his head once as he took a sip of his own brew. “They have been awfully self-absorbed. Others have noticed.” He raised his eyebrows and peered over his wire-framed glasses.

“Others? As in...*them*?” Satan tensed up.

“No, not *those* folks; The people.” God smiled faintly.

“Damn apes, self-conscious and all that...*hoopla*.”

“Most of them do care nowadays, Lucifer. Just differently.”

“I’ve seen the anguish. It’s odd, but yet...it’s refreshing. They are awfully suicidal.”

“Literally, or metaphorically?”

“Both. It’s sad, really. They don’t understand the Game.”

“They won’t. Cycles are in place for that reason.”

Silence once more as the main course arrived. Both plates adorned with sausage, eggs, bacon; the only difference in the syrup-soaked fluff of their choice.

“Where do you get your syrup?” Asked the Devil, taking a slice of bacon from his host’s plate.

“All around. I don’t have a preference. You?” The words were spoken between bites of pancakes, forgiving the action of his guest.

“I like Maple. Don’t care from where though. By the way, I thought pork was a no-go?”

“I make the animals, I deserve to try them as well.”

“Dog?”

“Once.”

Lucifer nodded to that and scooped up some eggs toward his mouth.

“You know that we can’t keep up our charades for too long, right? Sooner or later the religions are going to ask questions.”

“You mean the Sikh, the Zoro, who?”

“All of them, to a degree. I’m waiting to see the end result.”

“You mean *the* end result?”

“I tried giving them hints with the Caribou, eating all those stupid fungi. Then those other folks had to hide their findings in a book, and here we are.” God said somberly.

“They found other methods, not just that one. I love the antlers you gave them, though; It’s quite astonishing.”

“But that’s not the point. I can’t enlighten people if they’re going to outlaw what I give them!”

“Stubborn, self-absorbed, and self-reliant; It’s your image alright.” Lucifer laughed and took a few more bites of his already half-eaten meal. “This isn’t that bad actually.”

“What, their constant infighting?”

“No, the french toast.”

Silence fluttered in once again, as the two men stared at each other. Then they both broke out in laughter, unable to contain it further.

“Um, excuse me?” A small voice said, approaching. The waitress returned with a small black leather rectangle, and placed it on the table.

“Wh-whenever you’re ready.” She left with mild haste.

“A check?”

“I like to play human now and again.” God said, reaching for his back pocket

“Same here, but a check? In *Heaven*?” Satan said, also reaching for his pocket.

“I enjoy it.”

They both pulled out a gold coin and looked at each other inquisitively. The eyes of both men wild and unsure.

“I’m afraid this isn’t going to end very well, is it?” God spoke thunderously.

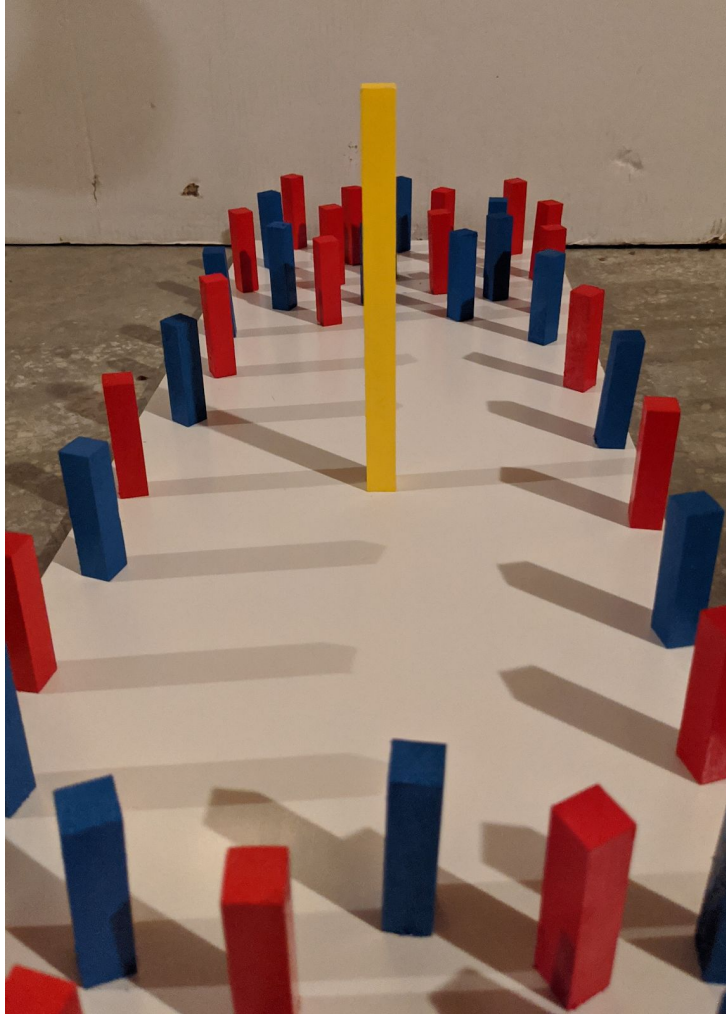
“Probably not. Weren’t we going to discuss something important?” Lucifer said with dark intensity.

The two of them sat, motionless, wallets unfurled and coins in hand.

Written by: Zachary White



"In The Corner" by Justice McDaniel



“The One Percent and The People” by Andrew Bouvier

Quick Stats:

Name: Diana @capturedmonsters

Age: Gen X

Sex: Female

Race / Ethnicity: Black, Korean. I still get all the slurs, even the ones that don't apply

Height: too short to reach anything

Weight: too fat to wear anything nice

Health: Generally broken. Chronic pain, diabetes, kidney and heart issues, debilitating migraines, severe depression and cPTSD.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Score: 8. Go ahead look it up, I'll wait.

I've always felt less than because of these stats.

My whole life, all I've ever wanted was porcelain skin. It wasn't until I was in my late 20s that a friend told me she envied my skin. She said it was: so clear and flawless-- that even without makeup and in summer you don't burn, in the winter you don't get pasty and doughy. She wished that she had my perpetual tan.

Tears came to my eyes. I was completely shocked. I couldn't believe her. It was so opposite of how I thought about my skin and my life, just everything.

When I was growing up, I envied my cousins, because they were "blacker" than me. They could fit in with other African Americans and have African American role models to look up to. My brothers and I being half black and half Korean we were not black enough to fit in, and too black to fit anywhere else.

I feel like I've always hated my skin. It determined whether someone's parents would allow us to be friends, or if I could use the bathroom in their house. Or if someone had to whisper a racist joke out of my earshot, or if I was the target of racial slurs or a moving target to be spat on. It determined where I thought I could go to college. It determined what I thought I could be. I felt so limited from such a young age and I blamed so much of it on my skin. To hear something so genuinely nice about it was a complete shock. For all the ways I've hated my skin, I never thought of it objectively as nice.

From that moment, I stopped letting my skin be a nagging excuse for not pushing forward. I stopped letting myself feel unequivocally less than. Maybe the world was really different and fairer now. Maybe that talk my dad gave me at 11 years old, that being a female, being mixed race, being black and coming from a poor socioeconomic status meant I was dealt a worse hand -- that I wasn't going to be treated the same way as my friends when walking into a store or during a routine traffic stop. That no matter what my good qualities, or how nonthreatening I am, there are prejudgments about me that predetermine how I'll be treated. That saying the wrong thing or moving too quickly can be the difference between a misunderstanding and bodily harm. That maybe we as a society are far enough evolved that things like affirmative action

might no longer be necessary. That is, until recently, when race and socioeconomic status are at the forefront of who and why certain groups are suffering more adverse effects from this pandemic. No matter how much we lie to ourselves and say we're all on a spectrum of experience and no side is better or worse than any other... it's kind of hard to refute when the death toll says otherwise. When brown and black people are genetically predisposed to diabetes and heart disease, and are more likely to be working at a job that requires long hours for low pay that doesn't allow them to work from the comfort of their home. These groups have more mouths to feed on less money which means less healthy food choices which perpetuate these poor health conditions... When society returns, we need to work on a way to raise up the lowest of the socioeconomic tiers to a true healthy livable standard. Being poor in America shouldn't deny access to healthy food and adversely affect your health.

As a society, we're better than this. And while it is no longer socially acceptable to discriminate, there are systematic hoops in place which effectively prohibit raising oneself above the caste you are born into. For college, I was the first in my family. My parents had no savings set aside for me, we had no social network to give me a leg up or even give me advice on what I needed to do. I personally was offended at the idea of taking a "diversity" scholarship, and it didn't occur to me until years later some of the things I didn't that I didn't know, things that left me at significant disadvantage when deciding my future and applying to schools. And at subsequent graduation from college, again the lack of social network, rampant nepotism and cronyism kept me from getting crucial interviews and personal recommendations that would make my resume stand out and put me on a list to be hired. We're decades past open discrimination based on race, but we are no where near equal opportunity when you dig just below the surface. We are at least in the beginning stages of reducing discrimination based on other immutable factors of identity, but we need to do more.

The exclusionary polarities that allow the systematic marginalization of groups based solely on things completely outside of an individual's control need to be eliminated. Our differences as long as they aren't infringing on the rights and/or safety of others provide us a wealth of viewpoints and experiences that we can use to make our collective experience in this universe better.

Diana @capturedmonsters



"Bird Whispers" by Diana @capturedmonsters

light is a wave. light is a particle. words are light.

i am an atheist in an animist's body
my mind draws the line at that which cannot be proven.
my metaphors are anchored to the world more firmly than
quarks are to each other.

to me
my lines tell a different story:
a bloody trail dripping across the snow,
shedding lost dreams and shunned sadness
flowing through a ruthless river coursing
through time
that no one but me
can see.

I wish that was the story my lines told.
but i wish my lines wouldn't ever change.
i wish for a wave-particle duality of style 'cause
that's what plays ping-pong inside my mind &
all my thoughts

tangible or not
come out so vividly tied to the spirits of this earth
& i wouldn't trade that for anything but
at the same time i'd like the ability to
soar, untethered.

the voices in my head say things like
"dynamic equilibrium" but the
part of me that thinks
like that
would
scoff at voices and
fate and
the slippery ways the other half of my

brain paints landscapes with
feelings and
outlines words with
the world.

but maybe i'm allowed to be like that
or who am I kidding?
i don't even need
permission
because the world as one
makes less sense even
than relativity and yet still
somehow
more sense than astrology and
neither
will leave my lines.

my lines:
maybe they're not parallel
not mutually exclusive like
night and day but
some twilight
of inelastic collisions
(serious or
spiritual)?
Crash.

Written by Sophia Rubens



"Discussing Humanity Over Breakfast " by J.F. Maxwell

Expression of difference is all I'll ever need,
the opposite of everything is all I've ever known.
there are so many things that I wish you knew,
but it feels like you already do.

when the sky is blue, my heart is black,
I'm someone that I'd love to hate.

my prison tatt's are unapologetic,
& everywhere I go, I'll always find a way
back home.

I would love to feel something else.

"Untitled" by Dylan Frank



"Broken Reasoning" by Jaina Cipriano

We don't want gravity to be the only thing keeping us grounded
We want connection

Not to float through life
As they do
Dependent upon materialistic connections
Filling what they forget

Inner peace is a consensual goal
Looking to Mother Nature or Capitalism to find it
Is the difference to identify

Wasting away it all
Life, Earth, Love
For the overload of temporary serotonin

Restricted and hidden away
Blind to the beauty behind the flash
Searching for the indoor sort
Organized adventure
Sheltered living

Suppressed primal instincts
Conforming to the squares of life
Forgetting the natural land
under the asphalt

We find it best to remember
Acknowledge the changes, adapt
Escape the constructing terrain
Finding the nature

Forgetting the modern thoughts
Adventuring further
Connecting with the animal inside.

Two worlds for us
Feeling half in half out
Wishing the override of the natural world would come

While they ignore the existence of their other world
Sticking to comfort
Change is a scary thing.

We search beyond the lies
We hear everyday
Find the truth;
Protect the beauty
That they say doesn't need protection

There is a choice

Sitting
Staring
Dying

Or

Exploring
Seeing
Living

What we choose can save or destroy
Life forms we know.
We choose to save
They choose to destroy.

Written by: Claudia Reuss



"Polarities" by Ali Publicover

