

Viscera (TRIGGER WARNING: Blood/Self Harm/Suicide)

As insomnia plagues my exhausted mind,
the monsters of my subconscious gnash
at the bars of their cages with sharp teeth.

Soon enough, they will be free.

I close my eyes, allowing the artificial sounds
of rain from my computer to synthesize
with the lightning spreading inside my skull.

1:27 a.m.

2:19 a.m.

3:48 a.m.

4:51 a.m.

5:32 a.m.

6:00 a.m.

I Drowning

I wake in a storm, ash-grey cumulonimbus clouds
rippling with lightning towering over my head.
A torrential rain pours from the shadowy heavens.

Completely alone, lost at sea, with nothing
and no one to save me, a massive tsunami rises
above me, then collapses, dragging me under.

Water pours into my lungs as I sink to the bottom
of my own Mariana Trench, void of all life and light;
my ice-cold blood slows my limbs' every move.

By now, both extreme pressure and lack of oxygen
cause my chest to collapse and my heart to rupture,
slowly suffocating as my dying thoughts consume me alive:

Everyone's laughing at you.

Everyone's finding out your secrets.

Everyone's going to abandon you.

I cannot breathe. I cannot breathe. I cannot breathe.

Diagnosis: Anxiety

II Death Wish

Memories and dreams of wishing I'd never been born
plague my mind like an ancient disease with no cure,
a terminal illness that blackens my blood, metastasizing
throughout my body until every part of me is necrotic.

Negativity infects every cell, destroying them slowly.
Unimaginable pain travels through every single nerve,
scorching my insides alive and ruining my brain.
My vision goes dark, and I descend into madness.

Crushing thoughts explode inside my skull,
screaming atrocities I'd never dare speak:
YOU'RE A FAILURE. YOU'RE A MISTAKE.
YOU'RE NOT GOOD ENOUGH. KILL YOURSELF.

Now, the disease has begun to corrupt my heart,
turning joy into sadness and love into hatred.
Chaos in my brain seeps through my brain stem,
and, unfortunately, spills out of my mouth.

When I finally commit suicide, leave me to slowly decay
by the maggots and the vultures. Allow them to feast
on the skin and muscles and bones of my withered body:
uncleaned, unquenched, unfed, unmedicated, unloved.

Worthless. Worthless. Worthless.

Diagnosis: Depression

III Night Terrors

I remember when they began; that damned dream.
Driving down Route 6, all stars and streetlights
exploding into darkness except for the green stoplight,
and when I turned the corner, all Hell broke loose.
I woke up and haven't been the same since.

Now unlocked from the cage of my subconscious,
my demons—mangled, skeletal humanoids burnt and bloody
with black holes for eyes—grab me with their needle fingers

and rip holes in my lungs like a knife through my ribcage.
They sink their long, sharp teeth into my body and feed.

And then I see it. Blood. Everywhere. I'm drenched in it.
I watch as it pours out of my room's pulsing walls of flesh
and spreads across the floors in rivers and pools of red.
Everywhere I go, the viscous crimson liquid follows me,
and my organs spill onto the floor. Evisceration.

Now hollow, I wander aimlessly, alone with my mind.
And that is when the deadly thoughts begin:
RIP OFF YOUR SKIN. GOUGE OUT YOUR EYES.
CHEW YOUR FINGERS DOWN TO THE BONE.
SLASH WORDS INTO YOUR ARMS. DIE. DIE. DIE.

And finally the nightmares. Horrible, frightening
dreams in the shadows of insanity, murder, and rape.
Memories of them continue to haunt me to this very day.
I cannot escape the night terrors and their echoing screams.
Where is the line between illusion and reality?

Horror. Horror. Horror.

Diagnosis: Schizophrenia?

IV Fractured

Gazing into a cracked mirror in the abyss
of my mind, I search every single shard's
image for some semblance of identity:
I slice open my hands trying to grasp it,
blood dripping down my fingertips.
Which reflection is the real me?

One fragment shows a female devil
with crimson skin, cold eyes, and dark hair.
She is my Wrath. She bares her sharp teeth.
Lashing out at me, she drags her claws against
my flesh, drawing blood from my crossed arms.
I stumble back as rage burns in my heart.

Another shows a colorfully dressed jester
with tiny bells on her hat and a wide
face-splitting grin. She is my Mania.

She cheers and dances around in confetti rain,
her rainbow eyes admiring her fantasy world.
I smile wide and laugh uncontrollably.

A third shows a doppelgänger—my Paranoia.
It wears my skin, and it has my face, but I know
what lies beneath: pulsating, shadowy threads
matching my irregular heartbeat. And the eyes—
thousands upon thousands of them. I can feel them
feeding on my thoughts. Get me out of here.

All of these personalities wage war inside my body,
destroying innocents—my relationships—in the process.
“I hate you.” “I love you!” “Leave me alone!” “Stay!”
A light switch flickers on and off in my very soul.
Overlapping contradictions create fissures in my flesh.
At last, I clutch my skull and shatter like a mirror.

Who am I? Who am I? Who am I?

Diagnosis: BPD?

V Lethal Perfection

Obsession and Compulsion stab me
through my chest, striking paranoid fears
into my fragile heart: contamination, doubt,
orderliness, harm, and forbidden thoughts
begin to spread through my wounded body,
infecting my brain with mud and bacteria.
I scrub and scrub but I can't get clean.

Soon the doubts creep in: did I lock my car?
Did I turn off the lights? Did I offend them?
Did I hurt their feelings? Did I cheat on my ex?
Do my friends hate me? Am I dying?
Am I sick with a painful or contagious illness?
Am I a good person? Am I a bad person?
...Am I real?

And, moments later, the need for order.
I must purge all unnecessary clutter:
physical, mental, emotional—all of it.
Minimalism is vital. Organization is key.

Burn. Delete. Forget: My three daily rituals.
If I do not clear my life of waste, I'll be trapped
forever in an avalanche of sticky black tar.

Yet the final nail in the coffin remains;
contraband thoughts that I cannot share.
Explicit desires for sexual pleasure
from children and those I cannot have.
Violent urges to commit gruesome murders,
drenching myself in my victims' blood.
God, please, why does this plague torment me?

Obsession and Compulsion are two sides
of the same coin, a double-edged sword
forged in fire with ladder Damascus running
along the pristine blade. Although together
they can keep me safe, I have no shield,
and one perfect, deadly strike is enough
to send my mind into oblivion forever.

Perfect. Perfect. Perfect.

Diagnosis: OCD?

I open my eyes at last in the real world again
after a sleepless night of chaos. The monsters
have once more returned to my subconscious.

Oh, but they'll come back again; they always do.