

*I am not split
I am one
But I feel more whole as two
One weak, one strong
And neither able to carry on without the other
Unfortunately, they have no balance
One is not the essential complement for the other
With wavering trust, and deniable faith*

I woke up this morning feeling nauseous. Not from the rumbling in my stomach or a smell in my room, but from the taste of too much wine that has left a film on my tongue.

I jump up to go to the bathroom to relieve myself of the taste and lack of control. My toothbrush needs to be replaced as the bristles are all curved down and to the right. I brush too hard, which makes me wonder if I've ever brushed my teeth correctly. I make sure to brush my tongue, but since I'm leaning over the sink, I gag. I cough and tears well in my eyes. I don't stop brushing my tongue. I gag two more times until the tears are streaming down my face.

I turn off the water and wipe my mouth with the back of my hand. I look in the mirror and I pause. My eyes are puffy from crying, so naturally they well up. My face looks worn and though I am young, I look tired and overworked. The tears that stain my cheeks are dry and a breath of wind on them triggers something in my emotional psyche to push the rest over the edge.

The next thing we know, she is on the ground ugly crying, holding herself and rocking back and forth. Now she is with us. We've tried coddling. We've tried affirmations and encouragement. When we look at her and see the shell of a human she has become, we almost scoff. What is wrong with you, little privileged woman? What could be so wrong in your life that you need to be so dramatic as to sit like a mental patient in a straight jacket? When are you going to snap out of it? People are waiting.

People are waiting. Waiting for me to change. Waiting for me to become something I have no clue how to become. I don't even know if there is a better version of myself. When it looks at me, I only feel shame. It used to be mean and berate me with comments about my issues. Now that I'm older, so is it. It tries to support me. Now it wonders if there is any hope.

I remember that I don't have time to play victim on the floor, and I wipe my face. Even though I want to cry more, scream, kick, stab myself, run into a wall, bang a door on my head, cut out whatever this is that's ruining every fucking day of my life...I can't. I don't have the time. There is no time to wallow or grieve for myself. If I take the time I need to process my issues, it would take too long. More people will give up on me. I will continue to give up on myself.

It wants me to understand that's not true. It wants me to get up, but to get up with a better mindset and outlook on my day – on life. But when I stand up, and we are looking each other in the eye, it stands strong. I crumble. Now I'm starting to realize that I'm losing myself. I'm losing my self-protection. I'm losing my faith in myself. I'm scared I won't get through this.

We hug her. We hug her tight. She is always her, but she is remiss. We feel her trust fading. If she no longer believes in us and our ability, she will continue to drown. We can only do what we can for her. She has so much potential, but there is something in her that no one can figure out how to get to – how to get rid of it. We know she wants to feel better, be better, and live better. But she struggles with her faith in herself and in us. We've been with her all her life and, yes, we too have our faults. But as she grew, so did we. We looked after her, kept her as alive as we could. Maybe now, she can't depend on us anymore. Maybe now is the time for us to let her go this life on her own – independently of us. She is so fragile. We fear the next time she breaks, she won't be so easily put back together. We believe in her – but it doesn't matter if she doesn't believe in herself. If she stops seeing us, we have no way of returning. If she stops seeing us, she's on her own.

I still see it. It tries. It holds me now and tries to bring me back. And as it holds me, I finally take the time to wonder if it is the problem or the solution.