

INSIDE

By Donna R

What is it like to be me?
Oh, the things I wanted to be...
Climb the hill and stand above,
Find the one that would love...me
Yes, me with all of my peculiarity.
I write each day as best as I can.
It is written down. It is my plan.
My meds are out in open view,
But there are days I don't see you.
There are ups and there are downs.
I live them all with smiles and frowns.
I try my best to get on through.
I am not so different from you.
But inside I am struggling the way,
Every step is a a new day.
When things are grand,
I'm on a pedestal stand.
When things are not well,
I am not one to always tell.
I only know this is me.
I have a crutch as you can see.
My meds help me through it all,
But when I forget to take them, then I fall.
Why do they slip my mind...
When without them I am partially blind?
I believe it is because sometimes I forget
That I am like this low flying jet...
Soaring around and trying to stay close to the ground
Without my meds I will truly crash down.
I will then Restart my engine and try again.
Being me is not easy to be,
But it is easier with my family...
Who help me no matter when...
Who support me to no end...
Who accept me as I am...
Who love me and hold my hand.
I am trying as best as I can
I will never give up on my plan.

Kaleidoscope of the Mind

By Aparna Mahal Sylvester

I'm a multi-faceted kaleidoscope with many beams.
In my life I have accomplished countless goals and dreams.
I have been a world traveler and a teacher, just to name a few.
In China, Germany and India I have seen the early morning dew.
I am a published author, photographer and freelance writer.
In all honesty, my life couldn't be any brighter.
Yet, my mind is far from the norm.
You see, I have weathered many a mental storm.
I have Bipolar Mania to a certain degree.
Although, I have never let Mania define me.
I am not ashamed that I have a treatable illness.
Medication helps my mind to achieve stillness.
I was diagnosed later in life when I was in my prime.
I have even been in a mental hospital more than one time.
Taking medication fights Manic episodes with all it's might.
There is no shame in taking helping pills at night.
I am a human being, just like you, with strengths and flaws.
To mislabel what I have does not help my cause.
I am NOT "mental", a "mental case" or even "Insane".
I have a treatable disorder of the mind to which ostracizing brings pain.
I am sunshine, confidence, faith and humbleness.
I am NOT some "frenzied" or "crazy" mess.
I strive to be an inspiration to others with my words.
What I say is NOT "strictly for the birds".
Respect my mental illness which countless others possess.
My wish is for you to educate and understand, judge less

Love is stronger than death
By Nadine Hey

Cold, pale skin
Life disappears from his body
Leaving my heart iced
Physically leaving me forever

Things I could have done
So many things I could have said
So much more time
I could have spent with you

Spending time on my phone
Spending time with nothing
So much time wasted
That we could have filled with memories

Now, I would do everything to spend one more day with you
To go on a big adventure
To memorize every pore of your face
Everything is an adventure with you

Loss, Pain, Illness, Love
Mixed in my body
A never leaving pain
That tears my heart

Strange feelings –
Try to control me
Try to control my mind
Try to control my life

Acceptance is key
To keep our good memories in mind
To keep them alive
That is how you stay alive

Isn't about that?
Pain shows that I love
How much I loved you
How much I will always love you

Love is the strongest power
Lasts every distance
Doesn't fade over the years

Love survives even death
Dad, I love you –
With every cell of my body,
More than anything else
Forever

Our Family
By Susan Wagner

An eruption of shame and
Red heat rises to my face

After whispered words:
It's always the mother.

*He needs parental discipline,
Natural consequences,*

As if we haven't tried.

We must explain him, detain him
Restrain him, retrain him.

Words spew - neighbors, teachers
Extended family members, who say

It's your fault because you're the mom.

Our small home shakes, our feet
Stumble, our lips plead – help.

Our lava meets the world's sand
Our glass house is fragile

We have no bad children
No bad parents, just illness.

Self-Stigma Solution
By Sarah Walsh

I hear joy:
backyard evening
 birdsong moment
robin bringing rain
 wormy feast