

On Masking

Do you know what it's like to overthink -

Every moment feelings sink...

To shrink yourself, to stretch and bend?

To be a better student, friend, lover, mother, daughter, worker...

What if bending breaks or hurts her?

Do you know what it's like to stuff it down?

Every feeling, sight, or sound

To hide the way things make you feel

Until it's hard to tell what's real.

Be smarter, smaller, less obnoxious.

Every interaction's conscious.

When she shrinks her feeling smaller,

What's the lesson that you've taught her?

Do you know what it's like to just try harder?

To try it all but get no farther?

Every task and every lesson makes a deep and dark impression.

I can't, she cries, but no one listens.

Each time she just can't get it right, she loses just a bit more light.

The light that shines inside her soul...

The light that they want to control.

They'll dim her magic, snuff her light,

Tell her that she can't get it right.

Then wonder why her whole life through,

She second guesses what is true.

If it's true, then she'll keep bending,

Stretching, stuffing, tries unending.

But what if true is true for you

But not for her? What would you do?

If you took on her perspective

Could you still meet each objective?

With all her thoughts, her feelings, pain

Swirling deep inside her brain?

How do you think you would fare

If everyone were unaware?

Unaware of what you need,

How you function, how you read

Each person and each situation:

Requiring full concentration.

Compensation helps you pass

Helps you outlive, outplay, outlast.

But what about when you're at home

And stop your passing once alone?

Feelings all come flooding back.

Thoughts are racing off the track -

All that bending breaks at once.

She crumbles now, just like her fronts.

Just because the dam will hold

Doesn't mean she should be told

To keep her light, her soul away

Where it can't see the light of day.

Have you ever known the cost

Of precious time and memories lost?

Lost stuckness, frozen still,

No matter just how much she wills

Herself to stand and try again

Or asks her hands to try and mend,

The pieces they all say are broken.

Why won't they leave those words unspoken?

She knows the challenges she faces

A wild mind that always races

A heart that has too much to hold

A mouth that speaks the words too bold

A mask that hides her vibrant mind,

With unending thoughts entwined.

She breathes in deep with air anew

She shakes her hands and fingers too

And once she's finally safe and free

She dreams of all that she could be

If she could break the mask she wears

And show the person hiding there.