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## More than Existence

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# More than Existence

## Madison Rodriguez Fowlkes

the lull betwixt the last leaf to fall  
and the first bloom of spring  
calls for a chapter of introspection  
after months of days blocked by the hour,  
the assignment, the class, the shift,  
my first thought, by default, being relief  
the joy of all things I could do with my "free time"

after taking a moment to fully exhale,  
feeling rested and renewed I think,  
but what is it that am I to do now that I am only me?  
not actively a student or an applicant  
the incessant thought of  
how many of my boxes are checked,  
or whether or not  
what I am doing will look good enough on paper compared to others,  
fades, becoming almost unobtrusive  
but still present enough  
for contemplation of goals, my passions,  
for a moment, I can take a step back and ruminate.

who could I be?  
the endless timelines,  
the stories that have yet to be written,  
the landscapes that have yet to cross my eye,  
my bones splinter under the weight of all the lives I could live  
but just a finite number of days left



a writer  
in the gloomy mountains I indulge in my darkest depths  
strange, familiar, comfort in the desolation  
a recluse, pen to paper  
the soothing white noise of a river flowing in the distance  
beyond the trees,  
perhaps the answer is in there somewhere  
though, I know I could never grow here  
is comfort, happiness?

a simple life  
a big red farmhouse  
a wood fire stove to warm my skin in the night  
the light of the sun by day as I rest in a field of wildflowers  
watching the speckled clouds slowly dance across clear blue skies  
a psithurism fills the air  
only, where is the purpose?

a daughter  
one that could always have someone to turn to  
a woman, vowed to protect me from my first breath  
instead,  
a severed relationship,  
unheard cries for love and acceptance  
persistently cut by the leftover glass in my mother's own wounds  
she never bothered to pick them out  
so I don't know how to clean my own  
instead I am stuck,  
lying in a pool of self doubt  
fueling the fire that envelops me  
of my own assessment of worth and achievement

despite who I could be,  
I know that I am most notably  
a wife  
a girl who cowered into her dark corners  
now painstakingly accepts her light as she delves into me  
beckoning me to bare myself as I am  
to relax, to reflect, to live as if its my last day on earth



and if it was?  
if I die tomorrow, will I be satisfied with all things done thus far?  
will I mourn the lives I could have lived  
or appreciate every step  
of the onerous journey towards a passion  
even if I never get close enough to brush my fingers against it?

the truth is  
all I wish to be in this life  
is a sanctum,  
an attentive ear ready for one's concerns,  
a trusted source,  
a shoulder to laugh or cry on,  
as I so desperately seek myself

so if today was the last day,  
if I never got to see the next bloom,  
or write the next page,  
as the sun disappears below the horizon  
together, amongst the wildflowers  
I hope we can all find our peace.

