

# Hero

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Born with great potential,  
He had a fire that burned brightly inside of him,  
A burning desire to make the most of himself  
And to do the same for the world around him;  
He had the power to torch any obstacle in his way  
On his great path to success.

But something else hid inside of him,  
Something that held back the fire,  
Preventing his potential from being set free.

In every moment, his mind was filled with doubt,  
The chains of anxiety had bound him,  
And he could not summon the fire to melt them.

Fear seized him,  
Telling him not to push himself,  
Not to be different,  
Not to take initiative;  
Every new opportunity was but another chance to make a mistake.

So, he stepped back,  
Choosing to be given everything,  
And never to take anything for himself;  
He was so scared of making mistakes  
That he never tried to step out of the box and truly be himself  
How could he ever live a life of meaning when he's just following a set of instructions?  
How could he ever be more?

They tell him that it's going to be alright,  
That he just needs to calm down,  
But they can't feel what he feels;  
They can't feel the self-deprecation,  
They can't feel the internal condemnation,  
They can't see what he sees,  
They can't see the sharks swimming all around him,  
How they inch closer to his soul,  
How they tear out his hope, his will, his confidence,  
They rip everything away until he is left only with fear.

The anxiety is so suffocating,

His chest is so tight:  
He can't breathe,  
His stomach has made him so nauseous:  
He can't eat,  
His mind is racing:  
He can't sleep,  
His whole body is so sore:  
He can barely move.

All the while he wonders  
How his head could made him so sick,  
Shouldn't he just be able to flick a switch  
And change it back?

If only it were that easy,  
If only he understood what was going on inside of him,  
If only he had a way to stop it,  
If only he could find a way to stop blaming himself,  
If only someone could tell him that it's not his fault!

He saw himself in the mirror,  
The fiery passion gone from his eyes,  
Replaced by the look of a prisoner of fear,  
He could not take the monster that he had become:  
He was weak and aimless, capable of nothing,  
He wanted to be more, but a beast inside kept holding him back,  
He hated that beast!  
He hated himself!

The shards of glass rained down on him,  
Cutting away at his very essence,  
Ripping the fire out of him,  
And leaving only an empty man  
Just as fractured as the mirror now was,  
As the blood on his fingers and the tears in his eyes mixed  
To form a poisonous concoction  
Of hopelessness and dread.

How could this happen to him?  
Why had this happened to him?  
What had he done?  
Was there a way out?  
He saw none.

He lay on the ground,  
Trembling uncontrollably

And crying from all the pain in his mind and body,  
But still he refused to stop fighting,  
He just needed someone to help him back up.

She rescued him from the chaos  
And lifted him back up,  
Providing him with wood for a new fire,  
Since she believed in him even when he did not,  
Her patience and compassion were beacons  
On a long road to redemption.

The journey on this road was long and hard,  
And the pain persisted,  
But eventually he was ready to re-ignite the fire.

To his surprise, the fire was already there,  
The fire had always been there,  
Because the validation he needs comes from within,  
She just helped him find it again.

His story is not just my story,  
It can be anyone's story,  
So please, let us shed light on those who suffer in silence,  
Let us believe in them,  
And let us help them find their fire again.