Final Reflection – Artemis Allison

Who am I as a writer?

That’s a good question that I wish I still had an answer to, because honestly, I really only think of myself *as* a writer nowadays, but never what *kind* of writer I am – who am I? Artemis Elizabeth-Violet Allison. What do I do? I write, and usually, I write about queer characters being, well, queer in some way, shape, or form, and if I’m not writing about LGBTQIA+ characters, I’m writing about characters with trauma, both as an exploration of that trauma and as a way for me to unravel some of mine. I could very easily be defined by this: I’m a trauma writer; I write trauma, and I explore trauma, and I’m hurt by my own trauma, but to define who am as a writer by this feels odd to me, and I’m not entirely sure why. Most of my writings are explorations of pain, but to define them by that pain doesn’t make sense; to me, it’s like saying that because a lot of my characters are, in some way, extreme bastardizations of some aspect of my personality that is then flanderized into being their own character that they’re all self-inserts: technically true, but not in the way that I like. It’s like saying that because I write fanfiction, I’m solely a fanfiction writer and that I don’t have a creative thought or character in me, even if the way I write characters differs wildly from how others might.

I think it’s the characters that I write, though, that make my stories uniquely mine; it’s my emphasis on them, on their agency, on their actions that compose the majority of what my style is. It’s my ability to use them to foster believable conversations – something that, at least I’ve been told, is somewhat difficult to do – that makes my writing interesting to read, as is my ability to convey their emotions without needing us to hear what exactly they’re thinking (third person limited is a fun writing style and I love it so much, sue me). As a result, however, I know that sometimes my ability to truly paint the world around them or to make impactful, zingy quotes is a bit limited, because it’s not what I emphasize, I suppose. It’s a style that comes pouring out from my head and into my typing, which, while it has some problems with flow sometimes, is a style that unless you somehow steal my brain and wire it into a computer, you can’t easily replicate.

Which is why some of my best stories this semester have been the ones where I was able to enter that state of flow entirely in my opinion, as they were the ones I enjoyed writing the most. The childhood exercise, which came to me in class and I *had* to write then and there comes to mind, as did the original Tully story as well as Sharp Pain, whereas Firebrand and the finished version of Always Whole struggled a bit more in getting into that stage and were stories where I was eagerly looking at the wordcount to be able to put my fingers to rest and call it good. That’s not to say that I’m unhappy with either of them – I still really am, and based off of the peer reviews I got, people think they’re good too – but they’re not to the same level as most of the things that I’ve enjoyed writing, I suppose, in my mind.

So where do I go from here?

If I’m lucky, I manage to find a way to at least mildly monetize my writing so that I can keep doing it without needing to suffer trying to find a way to monetize it in a way I dislike, like technical writing, even if it means also having to work night shift at a 7/11 in Seattle to be able to afford rent. If not, eh, that’s fine, and I’ll hopefully go on to become an English teacher anyways. Plus, I fear that if I turn it into my job, I’ll begin to hate writing, and that’s not what I want to do, but eh. Capitalism. What can you do.

It’s my love of my writing that makes me want to say that I did a good job this semester, I think. I hope. I think I missed a peer review here or there and turned some in late – to give myself some credit, I’m pretty sure I tried to go to upload some once but the folder hadn’t yet been created so I said “I’ll do it tomorrow” and then forgot by the time tomorrow rolled around because, well, ADHD is a very, very fun mental disorder. To fluff my ego, I feel like I have to say that I deserve an A, but by the guidelines, I think it’s closer to an AB or a B because of that, which is fine. At this point, I don’t think I’m going to fail any classes, and so long as I keep my GPA above a 3, I’ll call it good.