

# Black Lotus

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# Toxic Masculinity





## **Bloodletting**

toxic masculinity perpetuated by a broken society  
unrealistic socially reinforced prejudice  
anger,

betrayal by those thought forever loyal  
class warfare's mentally imposed shackles  
frustration,

slithering tongues damage to self confidence  
tainted memories of violent altercations  
paranoia,

acceptance of coping through alcoholism  
looming threat of student loan fueled indentured servitude  
anxiety,

bloodlet  
or bleed to death

## Pieces

grey and numb  
remnants hang on the outside of me,  
grey and numb  
threads dangle from the hole in my chest,  
grey and numb  
each shape bursts forth from a ravine of iniquity,

a memory triggers  
the colors flood  
a response meant for a past aggressor  
distributed unjustly  
the innocent leave  
the memory fades,

grey and numb  
my pieces chime in the winter winds

## Another Day

heart flying  
sweat pouring  
real or fiction  
past or present  
why is it all merging?

unable to sleep  
the smallest creak  
knife in hand  
attack the sound  
your demons have come to claim you

feel a presence  
a shift in the room  
eyes open  
grab the gun  
before dread consumes you

no one is here  
but you'd better check  
adrenaline rush  
listen close  
maybe they can hear you

6 a.m.  
senses dull  
ready to quit  
sun is up  
time to work

## It's Fine

event after event  
always something to blame  
overlooking the truth  
deep below the surface

cover the cracks  
fill the pavement with alcohol  
war stories  
always strength, never damage

black it out  
emotion isn't needed  
love is gone  
success will fix you

quick health check  
below the surface  
no surprise  
the faults have grown

a little deeper  
it should be okay

how odd

the foundation is crumbling

## Helpless

blood-soaked stripped shirt  
the video still burns in my head  
moans of agony  
intubated on an S.I.C.U bed

should have been sitting next to him  
foot surgery rearranged fate's thread  
tripped on the body next to him  
couldn't escape, so he played dead

oxycodone haze  
on the waiting room floor  
poster boards of hope we create  
the days become a blur

mistaken for opening day theatrics  
the tear gas grenades pop  
screams ring out  
the bodies, start to drop

pain in his words  
describing methodical killing  
heart hurts  
passive courtroom listening

outside we praise his resilience

he shouldn't have to do this alone

we are taught strength is silence

unfortunately, we are men



# What Lurks Beneath





## The Grey

the soldier who mans the gate grey  
has perfected the state of numb

it happens now, randomly  
tears spill from windows

emotional dissonance for survival  
it's best to ignore the weight's sum

confusing, the irrationality  
why the sudden flood?

hypervigilance to protect the owner  
he can't know the door is broken

back to groggy and grey  
over as quick as it began

water breaches the top, occasionally  
but the floodgates, they mustn't open

the feelings, they never stay  
but something, something is wrong

## Non-Member

white kid growing in a black neighborhood  
tries hard but doesn't fit in

across town for sports with other white kids  
tries hard but doesn't fit in

links up with the smart kids  
tries hard but doesn't fit in

attempts to just be himself  
picked on

attempts to dress like the kids at school  
picked on

attempts to act like his peers  
picked on

hangs out with gang members  
accepted, but doesn't fit in

hangs out on the block  
understood, but doesn't fit in

argues with parents for understanding  
no common ground, can't fit in

tries to work in America professionally  
speech to ideology, can't fit in

finds peace in another country  
obviously, impossible to fit in

it's believed humans are inherently social  
I'm not one, I can't fit in

## **Loyalty (poem by Dee Rose)**

I've bled for it  
mental pain manifested into the physical  
it's because my dedication is deeply rooted  
and then ripped out like a weed in summer  
trampled in the dirt by an aggressive runner  
then leaving a bloody mess in its wake

I've cried over it  
there's nothing worse than when the feeling's not mutual  
tears of abandonment when it maneuvers to neutral  
sprinting away from me with great speed  
even though, I'm its greatest champion  
it makes me feel as though I'm not worthy

I've worshipped it  
praised others for giving it its due  
because I know it's the only thing besides love that's true  
when it's reciprocated, it's the ultimate joy  
it empowers all whom it embraces  
it produces smiles even though it remains faceless

I live it  
I breathe it  
I love it  
I heed it  
I want it  
I need it

## Run!

ignored with chain distractions  
the unrelenting march of stress  
thoughts of inadequacy stuck on replay  
capitalisms molding of unnecessary necessities  
driving the suffocation of self-worth  
social media propagating fabricated lifestyles  
rhythm lost amidst, these artificial lives  
out of sync, lost in an ocean of the lost

under this false composure  
if only things would click,  
I would flee society's enclosure  
the cage door would get a swift kick  
reject the negativity saturating my bones  
breathe without dream crushing indoctrinated expectations  
break the binding shackles of student loans  
explore without constricting financial limitations

but things do not click  
for people like me

my resources are thin  
my life is survival

I will die here  
just like the rest



## This year

the year you long for the presence of another human  
the worldwide pandemics smothering isolation  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year you return to the cell you struggled to escape  
an auto-immune disease taking shape  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year you carry a pistol on every out of the house trip  
a looming threat from a trey deuce Crip  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year you can't seem to scrub enough blood out of your car  
rushing your brother from a drunken accident to the ER  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year your paranoia has you preparing for war  
confronting a gang OG to settle a score  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year your brother is shot at a movie premier  
another mass shooting endemic to America's atmosphere  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year you lose the family you think you created  
self-destruction after a promiscuous girl you dated  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year you get jumped for the ideology you uphold  
punching an OG who is trying to assault a 16-year-old  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year your friend calls in agony uncontrolled  
his sister shot dead at 17 years old  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year you pass the crime scene in between blocks

a friend's mother murdered in front of the mailbox  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder

the year your first love slits her wrists  
psychological torture simply because she exists  
burn a little for fuel then over the shoulder,

the year you finally understand what you always knew  
this year is every year the trauma remains whole  
and this year is the year it finally stops you  
a brain overflowing with unprocessed emotional coal

## Her ring

warmth from a past long gone  
leaps to life as it comes into view  
insides no longer numb  
happiness manages to break through

hesitation to leave my seat  
must push through the fear  
it's okay to feel love, a little  
even if she isn't here,

a short walk in perfect weather  
breathing in the nostalgic view  
a historic mansion of white and red  
the sky for once, a clear blue

happy anticipation as the hinges creek  
old leather couches and the antique car  
smile as my shoes tap the hardwood floor  
glance into the whiskey bar

contentment fills my chest  
a renewed urge to explore  
to the carpeted stairwell  
and up to the second floor

a wooden plank creaks  
the memories of her flood  
my eyes fill with water  
my hands coat with blood

a private midnight tour  
by an employee most kind  
we were so outrageously lucky  
how could I have been so blind



not being able to live without another  
matters not when you push them away  
poisoned to the core, or so I thought  
murdered our relationship with my decay

we took a picture here  
on this stairwell in front of this mirror  
you and I were happy once  
the picture couldn't have been clearer

ended things between us  
sealed my pain in a pastel coffin  
hid it in the depths of my mind  
separate from the me that is rotten

purposely ignored the action's weight  
but soon realized it was an impossibility  
had to try to win you back  
to show how much you meant to me

pictures and construction paper  
a two-room grandstand play  
a cheesy self-made storybook  
and chocolates on display

at the end of the book, a ring  
but the damage had already been done  
it was too late  
the rot, my poison, had already won

it was never meant to resurface  
but it will not stay buried  
the coffin just keeps screaming  
it was you I should have married



# Forest Bathing



## Where did it go?

anger on the onion peeled back  
an ocean of sadness underneath  
volatile weather encroaching newly found peace  
tenacity now weathering the attack

illness, mental and physical  
subdued previously by sheer wrath  
freely distorting the traveled path  
digging this deep doesn't feel natural

sifting through the sorrow  
two layers in, looking for an out  
hoping a single bud will sprout  
how deep did happiness burrow?

## The Black Lotus

in murky lake water floating  
her silent mystique stilled my heart,  
poisoned from my past, slowly decaying  
I was trying not to fall apart,  
her beauty distracted from the pain inside  
her intellect refreshing, and for a time I forgot,

the warmth of sunlight hitting skin  
kindness which I had never known,

the calm of nature's most serene sight  
support in which the world could be grown,

fresh mountain air, her smile  
interaction with her body of any kind,

water on a sweltering summer day  
conversation quenching the thirst of a mind,

too busy ignoring my own inner peril  
her murky water, I didn't even acknowledge,  
still, she planted and nurtured a seed  
deep below my rot, without my knowledge,

while my past continued to fester  
she became my world  
25 years of poison I started to remember  
my thinking flipped  
numb and black, I saw myself,  
for her I could not empathize  
bankrupt, my inner wealth,  
I had nothing left to give

dead inside, a reoccurring thought  
logical thinking I tried,  
let her go, she deserves better  
it was painful to decide,

I placed her back into the lake  
not knowing what I had done,  
the wounds she healed, I would not know  
for many years to come,

the seed she planted is now blooming  
but the lotus herself, is long gone  
somewhere out there, still floating

*--To Candice Konishi,  
Wherever you float in life,  
I hope you find the happiness you deserve. --*

## Growth

amidst everything black and dead  
hope itself has joined the rubble

scoured to core for warmth that fled  
finding only ruminations trouble

only with fight's dying breath  
does it make itself known

birthed through decay and death  
in rotten soil it has grown

the only piece that hasn't died  
a single green leaf where there are none

happy thoughts cast aside  
the real work has just begun



## Therapy

tic toc EMDR clicks through memories past  
the dark corridors seal is broken,  
box after box reveal the pain by processing  
find out why will has finally broken,

crushing weight, restricting breath, fear floods  
pitch black, senses scream, death is approaching,

stop the bleeding and offer support  
each time a younger you was broken,  
room by room parts left to fend for themselves  
step inside and feel again each time a heart was broken,

muscles surge, kill the threat, anger as defense  
can't fight, too late, death is approaching,

talk about the truth of your reality  
normal human responses before you were broken,  
address what has happened and foster new growth  
the only way to repair what has been broken

## 金継ぎ (Kintsugi)

puzzle of a brain shattered on the floor  
a heart's pieces snipped from the hole  
self-reflection as empty eyes meet the mirrors glaze  
over thirty years but finally fully razed

tears, dreams, ambition,  
water, gold, lacquer,  
mix

piece by piece my mentality will be reset  
piece by piece my heart will become golden

~~~~~

A single piece of you can grow  
into something extraordinary.

No matter how downtrodden or broken you are,  
find that piece.

Nurture it.

With time it will bloom like the mythical black lotus.

~~~~~



COMING SOON

NINETEEN  
BECOMING WHOLE

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Erin Jay Moyer is a poet, novelist, and a lover of language with a degree in linguistics. After releasing *Black Lotus* he intends to finish the second novel in his dystopian action adventure series, 'NINETEEN'. Past poetry books have included: 'Even A Rose Has Thorns' and 'The Unknown Poet: introduction to society'. Erin has traveled through Guatemala and Honduras to record speakers of the Ch'orti' language. He spent two years living in Japan and teaching English. He has recently returned to America to pursue a career as a writer and a computational linguist.

## Books By This Author

### Nineteen: A Hero's Rise

Our nation's wealth disparity finally caught up. The fight against the wealthiest one percent ripped America apart. Recreational drugs created and weaponized by the government have turned citizens into addicts. The remaining police have formed gangs to assert control. The one percent have relocated to cities that are sectioned off by giant walls.

Amid the chaos, Kai preaches that there is more to living than just surviving. He encourages his group of wastelanders to find things worth living for. Before anyone in his group is able to come to such a revelation, Kai is murdered. Nineteen reluctantly steps in as the interim leader and the group sets their sights on revenge.

Along the road to payback they find themselves on the front lines of a war they thought had long ended. Joining forces with unlikely allies, they take on their oppressors in attempt to attain lives worth living.



## Even A Rose Has Thorns

In this poetic novel an adolescent is struggling to figure out who he is and to find his place amongst the rest of the world. When his mother is diagnosed with a neuro muscular disease he rebels against societies accepted path and begins creating a path of his own. While opening his eyes to the world his path is riddled with murder, incarcerations, lost love, and the realities of poverty. Every poem plays a role in creating the bigger picture as the young man comes full circle along his path. Will he reach the person he has been trying to become or will his thorns get the best of him?

## Introduction To Society

Enter this world through a poets perspective as you witness the trials and tribulations of Erin Jay Moyer. Become a part of his journey starting today.

