

Dysphoria

A Collection of Gender Poetry

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She/Her

Table of Contents

Author's Note	2
Dysphoria	3
They v. Male	6
Dress: Part I	9
Dress: Part II	11
Dress: Part III	13
Dress: Extended	14

Author's Note

Here is just a small collection of gender related poetry I have written. Writing this poetry has helped me to cope with my dysphoria and understand my identity better. I hope my poems can be helpful to you and generate interesting conversations.

Content Warning: My poems are about my dysphoria and one poem in particular (*They v. Male*) features misgendering.

Dysphoria

Stuck in place like gum on a shoe.

Watching the world go by,
the train leaving the station-
leaving nothing but time

Time. Time. Time.

Time for confusion

Time for contemplation

Surrounded by flurries of motion and
people, yet completely alone.

The days go by, nothing changing.
Every time a light appears at the end of
the tunnel, a switch is taken.

At the whim of the world,
Bustling down the track,
without any control.

No hope in sight.
Constant, constant.

Commentary: This was the first poem about Gender I ever wrote. It came out extremely quickly because I had been thinking about my identity constantly weeks. I felt disconnected from my body and no matter how much I thought about it I could not make any progress.

The stuck aspect applied in multiple facets. First, I had been stuck thinking about the same things for weeks, months, and even years at times, no matter how much I tried to escape them. Second, I was stuck because thinking about

them did not provide any solution or any relief. If I confirmed my trans status, understood my dysphoria, what was there to do about it? If I like certain aspects of my body but not others, there are very little actionable steps to resolve it. And even if there are possible options via HRT or surgeries, they are not reasonable to get done quickly or at the given time.

While all these thoughts are occurring, I still have to go about my everyday life. I have to keep on moving forward on other things that seem to take priority. This is the hardest part for me, because I am surrounded by teachers, teammates, and friends that care about me, yet nothing they can provide can help me. I am surrounded, yet isolated and facing this challenge alone.

They v. Male

Mirror to the stand

The creature slithers up and spits:
LOOK at this male! The flat boring figure,
immense hideous shoulders...

STOP

How could you miss HIS rough face,
monster height, jagged muscles?

Society to the stand

It is a boy!

He, Him, His
Mister, Sir

Boy's room, men's room
Boy's clothes, men's clothes

I AM NOT A MAN

Oh, this is all so new, please be patient.

You must understand this is hard.

Please use the bathroom that matches
your identity

Men

Women

YOU ARE NOT LISTENING

Here, let me be more inclusive

He/She

Man/Woman

Mind to the stand

Why does it even matter?

You are a man

And if not, you are a man

Voice. Check

Face. Check

Body. Check

Penis. Check

PLEASE

You want to feel special

You want an easy way out

You want to feel included

STOP

NEVER

NEVER

STOP

Commentary: This poem was driven by my constant battle with myself to confirm my trans identity. I constantly battle within myself and debate if I am really nonbinary. My mind internalizes the messages from the mirror and society to use it against me.

Dress: Part I

I walk up to the home, and peer through
the window

The fire dances around the room, giving
everyone a warm hug

The soft light greets people as they come
in, placing their coats in the closet

I look optimistically up at the door,
hoping to be invited in
But I am sent away without any thought.

I continue my journey, house to house,
door to door.

I look for my home.

What was a large group, becomes a small
group. What was a small group, becomes
a few. Until finally, I am all alone.

Commentary: This poem was inspired by my desire to wear clothes that I did not feel I was able to wear. Particularly, I wanted to wear dresses but I felt both pressure from society and pressure internally to myself not to. I am often frustrated by how easy it is for cisgender gender conforming people to shop and find clothes that both make them happy and also conform to society. I envy that they do not think about it.

The going house to house aspect was based on walking by the shops in the mall and feeling not invited to come in. Particularly passing the women's only stores and seeing clothing items and body shapes I want, but knowing that I just look like a man to them and thus do not belong there.

Dress: Part II

I am starving
I feel disconnected

Through a river of molasses
Trudging—Step by Step by Step

Fingers hug the golden bars,
Feet dig into the soil,
Muscles tense,
Sweat beads,

The Golden Gate bursts off her hinges
and flaps her gated wings. She leaves the
ground, gold glitter butterflies glistening
the sky.

I am galloping through a pasture, brushing
grass rich off the golden rays of sunshine.

Commentary: This poem was inspired by my feeling of suffocation from not having clothes that made me happy. This got to such a point that I knew I had to break the barrier of going out in public to shop at a place that will provide these items to me. It is more than about shopping somewhere new though. It is also about having to get over the silent judgement that other shoppers and employees will pass on to me. There is also the potential for less than silent judgement.

Dress: Part III

Flowing floral gown
First true feeling of beauty
Tears flowing on cheeks

Smiling ear to ear
Rushing water breaks levee
Flood of emotions

Commentary: This poem was inspired by my first time trying on a dress. Thankfully, the first dress I tried on fit me perfectly. I was struck in awe by the way it made me feel. I was struggling to hold back tears and the amount of gender euphoria at that moment was the greatest in my life. It made me feel beautiful for the first time ever.

Dress: Extended

The camera pans
The harmonica sounds
The showdown begins.

She looks up and down
Hand onto the heel of the holster
Fingers twitch.

Gun flicks up
Bleeding out
Sigh released.

Commentary: This poem was inspired by a later experience I had going dress shopping. I was at Savers, looking through the more formal dress section. The lady who was also looking at the formal dresses, turned her head towards me and started looking me up and down. She let out a

deep sigh and rolled her eyes a bit. She asked me “Why the hell are you looking at dresses?”.

This spooked me to the point that I just left the store. I was terrified. I had been singled out specifically because I looked like a man shopping in the dress section. What did she think of me? Did she think I was some kind of pervert? There is nothing wrong with a man wearing a dress, but I am not a man in a dress nonetheless. I still think about this occurrence often, especially since this happened right outside of Boston, which I expect to be a safe place for trans people.