


October 2015

The Ritual of Breaking

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Recommended Citation

-, Anonymous (2015) "The Ritual of Breaking," *Pamoja*: Vol. 5 : No. 1 , Article 13.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/pamoja/vol5/iss1/13>

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THE RITUAL OF BREAKING

Anonymous

I loved you hard that winter.
I took everything you had. Everything you threw at me including the punches,
And I found beauty in your fists.
Saw you as a shattered Mona Lisa only needing to be swept back together,
So I searched for every broom, vacuum, dustpan.
Cleaning supplies can't hold broken people,
I needed them for myself.
There were days I laid in bed scavenging for strength to clean myself up,
To clean this mess you made of me...
But every ounce of courage I had I gave to you.
I confused the alcohol with water.
The smell on your breath no longer smelled toxic.
It smelled like Home.
And we buried ourselves in this toxic love.
We turned each other into monsters, poems into death threats,
But you were always the most creative...
Could transform "I love you" into "I'll KILL you."
But all I heard was "I" and "You,"
And that was enough to get me through the bad days.
The bad days,
Stung like fire.
They came so often I was never done cleaning up Wednesday's mess,
And here is Thursday morning,
With more blood,
And more scattered rooms,
And more broken souls.
And here is Thursday afternoon,
Smiles big + pretty,

And holding hands,
And skipping 'round,
And folks coming up to us talking 'bout "relationship goals."
I wanted to cry out for help every time.
Warn every girl that big eyes will swallow you in.
You will want to glue, hammer, nail back together his pieces,
But you are not a carpenter, love.
And here is Thursday night.
Finding yourself in the bathtub trying to drown out the bruises.
Your lungs once breathed his air and you want it all out.
And you will sit in the bathtub, sick.
Smiling at how loving him was the best thing you've ever done.
I loved you hard that winter.
This,
Is for colored girls who consider suicide
Every time he knocks a hue out of her rainbow.
You loved him hard that winter, didn't you.