

## Love Shouldn't Hurt

Pain so deep it bubbles in my soul like acid.  
Fear so strong it permeates my bones, turning them to ice and sits upon my chest,  
preventing my breath, my scream.  
Words that whip through my heart like sharp blades.  
Hate so fierce it winds its fingers around my throat and squeezes.  
Anger whirls around me in a tornado I cannot prevent, control or cease.  
A sick, secret shame engulfs me, drowns me and keeps me silent.  
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Any feeling of love has hemorrhaged away with each blow, with each wounding word,  
until my love, my blood, my tears have disappeared.  
My identity is gone, I am no longer who I was before.  
I am a shell of a person, and a hollow, empty, lonely void inside.  
Any happiness I felt has been sucked dry by the parasite who dwells with me.  
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I hate who I see in the mirror, I don't know who she is anymore.  
I can't bear to see my reflection, but I must look deeper.  
I see weakness, I see a spineless pitiful fool.  
I see someone who is too afraid to say 'STOP!'  
I see someone who is too afraid to leave.  
I see someone bruised and battered, whose clothes are ripped and tattered.  
I see someone with no soul, no courage, no strength.  
I see someone too scared to cry or scream or shout anymore.  
I see someone who thinks she deserves the pain.  
I see someone who can only shed a tear, and shake, and accept the blame for fear of it starting again.  
I hate that person in the mirror.  
I hate the reflection of someone who isn't me, but in fact it really is.  
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I didn't think love was supposed to be like this.  
I never thought the person I met so long ago would bloody my nose and rupture my ears.  
I never would have imagined he'd throw me to the floor by my hair and kick me again, and again.  
I wouldn't have dreamed he strike me so hard I could see only blackness and streaks of lightening.  
I couldn't have known the person who said he loved me could scare me so badly  
I'd urinate my clothing like a pathetic animal.  
I never would have guessed the person I met that day would be the one to leave me  
with more bruises, swelling, cuts and scars than I could ever count.  
I didn't know the scars inside would be the ones that hurt the worst and be the hardest to heal.  
He broke things I treasured, things I cared about, and threw them at me, slamming them to my body.  
He screamed and yelled at me so loudly, I still hear his voice in my head and my nightmares.  
He broke my heart, stole my spirit, my self and my soul.  
Somehow he made me believe it was my fault.  
I believe it, I accepted it and did nothing.  
It happened over, and over, and over.  
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But one day I looked in the mirror.  
I looked deeper, with more discerning eyes and I saw something.  
Beneath the layers of pain, sadness, guilt and darkness,  
under the sediment of shattered hopes, dreams and promises, I saw something else.  
I looked harder and saw a spark, yes, a glimmer of light.  
I fought through the tears and battled through the tremors.  
I pushed past the scars and cut away the cobwebs.  
There in the darkest depths of my existence I grabbed a hold of the flame,  
and gently drew it out.  
I was so cautious, so careful, for fear of extinguishing it.  
When I opened my quaking hand, I gasped at the sight before me.  
For there in my hand I held a cocoon pulsating with light and life.  
I closed my eyes, and opened them again to see my reflection once more.  
Somehow, somewhere, I saw strength and courage in my eyes again.  
I found the will to survive, succeed and prosper.  
My gaze returned to my warming hand and there unveiled,  
was the most beautiful, exquisite butterfly.  
It was so alive, so colorful, so happy, so peaceful and above all-FREE.  
I gathered myself in its presence, pushed past my fear and left without turning back, without a tear.  
I basked in the knowledge and discovery of life, real life, not the nightmare I had known.  
I did not deserve it; I did not have to accept it.  
I could do something-I could choose Life.  
I could transform myself from any empty cocoon to a brilliant butterfly.  
Love Shouldn't Hurt.  
Real Love doesn't hurt.  
Counterfeit Love will never hurt me again.  
I am a butterfly reborn.  
I have a new chance at life.  
I AM FREE!