

Still Here

Pain, chronic pain
Lead to self-harming
Saw a psychiatrist
Said something about killing myself
He said;” Go do it then”
Spiralled into everything going wrong
Led to counselling
Started to get better
Doctor told me he would take me off stronger meds
I took an overdose
Saw psychologist who contacted psychiatrist
Committed to Psych Ward
Had a breakdown in front of mum
All emotions came out at once
Felt something other than frustration for the first time in a long time.

 **creative**
commons Connor Robinson, October 2016

The Adventures of D.A. Smurf and Poncho Kid

A brother is someone who is there for you. They don't necessarily need to be related by blood, or live with you on a constant basis, but just generally be a part of your life in a mostly positive way. My experience with this is a gentleman, who for the purpose of this story will be named Poncho Kid. This is the story of Poncho Kid and D.A. Smurf: the dude, the rad, the lugsy.

D.A. Smurf met Poncho Kid quite a few years ago, and from the outset they got along great, instant connection you could say. Now, D.A. Smurf had a lot of hidden issues that he didn't tell anyone because he liked to make others feel happy and help them with their problems, so a lot of the time, Smurf felt quite alone internally. Poncho Kid could see that Smurf felt alone, because Poncho Kid understood how Smurf felt.

Poncho Kid would spend gratuitous amounts of time out of his schedule just to say hi to Smurf, to make sure that he was getting by okay which Smurf appreciated a lot; as to Smurf, Poncho Kid was like family. Slowly, Smurf became more aware of the fact that Poncho understood him and this helped Smurf open up to him over time. One day, Smurf bit the bullet and decided to tell Poncho Kid why he felt so alone. This was because outside of Smurf's normal time, he battled with an evil monster known as "isolation". This sparked a fire within Poncho Kid and he devised a plan in which to help his brother Smurf. Poncho Kid was going to take Smurf away, and teach him the ancient art of free love and how to master the powers of happiness. The day finally came, and Smurf was terrified, but with a sly little fist bump and his signature grin, Poncho Kid said "just chill Smurf, you'll beat this". That single fist bump changed everything for Smurf, it was as if he had been given a new lease of life. He was able to smile properly again, he was able to enjoy social aspects once more. He felt comfortable again.

From that point forward, Poncho Kid and D.A. Smurf would embark on their never-ending trip. Through adversities, hardships and all that cruddy stuff, they were able to prevail, and they now travel this world with one mission, one goal; to spread happiness to the rest of the world.

The Sun's Flowers

Deep in the heart of a beautiful emerald forest, down a long, straight road there was a small town where everyone would take part in a peculiar ritual as they turned 16. This town bordered a tangled mess of thorns that rose up against a towering rock, on which grew the most beautiful flowers anyone had ever seen. It was every 15 year-old's task, 3 nights before their 16th birthday, to make their way through the field of thorns to reach this rock and pick a flower to bring back to the village.

These flowers were very rare, you see. The village elders said this was the only place in the world they grew. And they were truly worth the effort to reach them. They had long shimmering petals that arced outwards from a glittering trumpet and they appeared to dance and quiver in the moonlight. As the young people brought these back, the entire village would celebrate the child's coming of age with a huge feast. This was always a wonderful time of life, even though the journey through the thorns seemed scary. Everyone always seemed to pass through them with ease and bring back a flower on their first try.

A young girl stood in front of the field of thorns in the week approaching her 16th birthday. She knew she would need to make the journey into the thicket soon. She was very worried. She confided this to her parents and they understood. Her mother and father held her tight and said they would always be there for her no matter what. Her mother tied a simple wooden necklace around the girl's neck for luck. It was a small circle with a tiny sun carved into it.

As it came to the evening 3 days before the young girl's 16th birthday she walked up to the field of thorns with the whole village behind her. She knew she had three tries to pick a flower over the next few days but that didn't stop her from shaking. She braced herself and strode into the thorns. She pushed the branches aside and stamped them down to make her way through. She found herself making very little progress and branches cut into her skin with their thorns. Fighting back tears she kept trying to push through but eventually she had to give in. She took a few steps backwards and found she could make her way through the thorns easily as they just parted for her. She came back to the village empty-handed, to obviously disappointed faces. Her parents hugged her tight and said not to worry, she had two more tries.

The second night, she had a fire in her belly and was confident she would make it through. Standing with the whole village before the thorns she stared at the field with a steely glare. She ran at the thorns, throwing herself into the thicket. Snapping branches and kicking away the thorns, she stamped her way through to the rock. But just as before, she found the thorns overwhelming and although she knew she made it much further than the night before, she had to give up. The scratches across her limbs and face were too much to bear. She turned back and found the thorns parting for her as she returned empty-handed again. Again, her parents clasped her to them as they comforted her.

By her final night, she was in tears before she walked to the thorns again. She hadn't managed to get through the thorns twice when seemingly everyone managed it on their first night. She had an idea as she left her house with her parents and grabbed her father's big, tough leather coat and wrapped it tightly around her. She strode up

to thorns feeling confident that the jacket would protect her and paused to look at the whole village watching her. She turned and stepped into the thorns.

They pulled and tugged at the jacket and her body as she tried to make her way through them. She found, as she stamped through the thorns, that the jacket was slowly being torn away by the thorns, soon leaving nothing but useless tatters. In the centre of the thorns, she found herself falling to her knees, exhausted and in tears. She couldn't bear to turn back as she couldn't face the shame of failing while she knew that carrying on would only lead to serious harm. She sat for a while thinking what to do, she gazed through the thorns at the moon high in sky, making it clear that it was the middle of a clear, cloudless night. She found her hand toying with the necklace her mother gave her for luck, thumbing the little sun carving a thought crept into her mind. She laid down in a space she made by clearing some of the fallen branches out the way and slowly fell into a deep, dreamless sleep.

As the sun rose, she roused herself and stood up. She dusted herself down and shook the dirt and leaves from her father's coat. She whirled the coat around herself and took a long stride forward. The sun warmed her arms as she used them to gracefully push the thorns aside, easily this time. The sun seemingly showing her a path through the thorns to the imposing rock upon which the flowers grew. They shone even more dazzlingly in the sunlight. She plucked one with satisfaction and turned on her heel back to the village, thorns parting easily for her. As she reached the clearing of the village she ran to her parents who had always been waiting patiently for her. They beamed as they saw she had succeeded through her difficulties.

The rest of the village, however, looked on in grim rage. The elders strode up to her furiously, chastising her for having walked through the thorns during the day. They said it was not how things were done here and that she had brought shame on the tradition. Confused, the young girl, now a woman in her own eyes, had no idea what to do. Her parents stood behind her as the elders told her that she must leave the village as she will never be recognised as a person there. Indignant, she and her family strode off to their house and packed their things. Her parents weren't about to let her be thrown out of the village all alone.

The three of them marched out the village, refusing to look anyone in the eye as they had done nothing to defend them from the village elders. They began the long walk down the long straight road through the deep forest. As they left the last of the tress, all three of them noticed the very same beautiful flowers blossoming almost everywhere. The same flowers they believed to be so rare could actually be found nearly everywhere in some shape or form.

Void

It all began at the age of 12
To a descent of madness, his life would delve
Into a loathing panic of hate and fear
To shun and lose all he holds dear

Taunted and scared of those around
Not of people, but the voice of no sound
The recurrence of anguish, oh, so loud
The gears of destruction commence to be wound

With a drip of relief, an abysmal sigh
Buried in your hands, you begin to cry
Begin to stutter and then to scream
At the persistent wake of reality's dream

Tap, tap, tap. You hear its call
Still some strength, you refuse to fall
Deafening roars! A moment of doom
And then it stops, or so you assume

And so you assumed and then you hoped
And then you stumbled and then you choked
And then you smiled, you think you know
But this cancerous demon, it will only grow

It will only grow to consume your life
Consume your soul and fill you with strife
Strife and anger, lonely nights
Will all be here when the demon bites

Slowing down, your mind is done
There is nowhere left for you to run
It is catching up, it's almost here
Time to leave forever or face your fear...

...HELP! It's here and I cannot hide
It feasts upon these scars inside
It hates to love and it loves to hate
A numbness now, I can't sedate

I can't sedate and I can't control
Falling now, into the deepest of holes
I'm falling deeper, time stands still
This cancerous demon was hired to kill

As I fall, I begin to see
That everything is not what I perceived to be
I realise that there are things I cannot control
But, yet, I am trapped inside this hole

In this hole, normalities do not apply
No joy, there is only sorrow in my eyes
Misery, disgust and pain is all I know
Deeper and deeper, this hole will go

At this point I see, I cannot disguise
My feelings are lost, I begin to cry
Begin to stutter and then to scream
As I fall asleep to reality's dream

As I wake, a dream it was
The demon is gone and I've found my cause
It will take some time but I can now stand tall
Never again, in that hole, will I fall...

...Slowly but surely, he lost the pain
Four more years and he was happy again
No more madness, hate or fear
Back to loving himself and those he holds dear.

 **creative commons** Steven Borland, October 2016