

Poetry

Self Portrait (I Am Not Doing This For You)

*By Tara Bernadette Egan*

It's not about the wig, the dress or pretty blouse

It's not about the make up, or who wears the trousers in the house

It's not about the presentation, the style, the scent, the heels

It is about the things I really, truly feel

I am not doing this, for you

Too long Society held me back, silenced stilted

Hidden aspects of Myself, Convention said were forbidden

Held in check, self denied, anxious and depressed

Always knowing I was different, but unable to confess

A Gender Role, a tie that binds

A sexual division, defined by genitalia?

A ridiculous decision

I always tried to act the part, of Boy, then Man and Husband

It crushed my spirit, broke my heart, left me lost

Isolated

I'm not doing this for you

A single spark can become a flame,

A flame a blazing fire

An inferno that purifies, clears the ground

Clears the way for new growth from Desire

When all along you've know the truth, but lied to everyone

'To thine own self be true' an empty tolling bell

Phoenix risen ,

Caterpillar to Butterfly,

Fledgling to soaring bird  
Buds blossom, leave unfurl

Comfort found in ones' own self,  
Pretence abandoned  
A whole new self image to explore

I'm not doing this for you

Then for Who?  
Can't I just be me?  
Do I have to conform to a new Stereotype?  
Another set of issues to beat myself with?

Phoenix to flame,  
Rise again  
I'll stand up, be true

I am not doing this, for you

The Girl in the Looking Glass

*By Jessica Stevens-Taylor*

I see you, girl in the looking glass.  
I've known you all my life,  
I've felt you hiding in the shadows of my soul.  
Hiding from daemons without and within ;  
A dangerous game we have played together ever since I was told I was a boy.  
The world told me how I should be and who I was, how could they all be wrong?  
It must have been me that was mistaken  
So I hid you as you hid in me.  
The daemons within growing ever stronger as I grew too weak to hide you.

Anxiety, Fear, Confusion, Self Loathing, Pain and many more;  
They circled ever closer, cold wings freezing your heart and soul

Oblivion beacons. So you had to step out.

Now I see you at last in the looking glass.

The pretence I have carried all my life gone.

The armoured shield I hid you behind blows away like grey mist in a spring breeze.

The sharp angles and rough edges of a masculinity cultivated so long melting into an authentic femininity,

Soft and smooth in your curves and smile.

I see you, girl in the looking glass. Tasting the world: newborn.

Laughing, crying, loving ; living at last. No more to hide in the dark, in the shadows.

I see you growing now, where once a lost boy looked back at me

With tears barely concealed

Now a beautiful girl laughs and smiles.

I see me, the girl in the looking glass.