

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

In Medias Res

by James Stiffel

'Breathe. Breathe. For god's sake, breathe.'

'Ok, then what? Shall I pick up the pen yet?'

'No! Just keep...breathing.'

'But...I need to get my thoughts down before...before the 'rain' comes again!'

'Just. Breathe.'

What am I doing? I'm...thinking...'with' myself! As children, we were often told that if we talked to ourselves, it was the first sign of madness. But if we 'thought' to ourselves...and no one hears us, how will we know? Maybe THIS is normal. Maybe THIS is rational. Maybe we SPEAK rational things. But what's going on inside is the complete and total reverse. Maybe the very essence of the words are floating around our minds, trying to find purpose, trying to be heard, trying to find...life! But instead, something 'rational' takes over, and the sole purpose for thing the words was created for...are then...lost.

My mind? Well, whatever it is that makes the human brain slam on its proverbial anchors and makes us 'rational', is now packing up its bags and considering a permanent vacation. Plus, there's really no point in telling myself to breathe, when its clearly doing jack shit!

CRACK-KOOM!

"Noise. Theres a noise! Its the world. Its their hatred of me, of...us!"

“Its thunder!”
“Its bad people. Its badness!”
“ITS THUNDER!”
“Badness!”
“Just help me now. PICK UP the pen.”
“Badness!”

I...we sit down by the kitchen counter and reach for the pen. The pen is alive, shaking. Trying to wriggle free. Or is that my...our hand? The other hand comes in for assistance of the first.
Ink meets paper.

‘Dear Jennifer.
Its Jack. I’m...’

‘Fine?’
‘Terrible. Awful. Living. Dying. Trying. Struggling. Flying. Crashing.’
‘Shut up! Breathe.’

‘...coping. You were right’.

‘No, wrong!’
‘WILL YOU LISTEN?!’
‘So wrong!’
“Fine. I’ll carry on without your help.”

I take a deep ragged breath. trying to write despite...myself.

‘The amount’s, too strong. Chemicals, still in me. Thoughts, everywhere and nowhere.’

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‘Birds.’
‘Family, must know.’

‘Look at the birds!’
‘I wasn’t myself.’
‘We was us!’
‘I fear dead.’

I have to wipe my eye at that one. God damn it. I had damn near control of myself up to that point. Maybe a splash of water on my face will help? No. I’ve come too far now. Focusing is key. Being locked up in this high-rise prison all week has been a blessing and a curse.

‘In old flat. Not sold yet. Broke in. Sorry. I fear dead. But fear me more. Isabelle.’

'Love her. Hug her. Cherish her. Teach her. Keep her.'

I choke on my tears and wipe my eyes. 'My picture of Isabelle. Keep it. I'll stay. Stay until the 'rain' clears. Don't write. Don't come. I don't need it. It's not why I've written. Remember my mind. Love you. Jack Hydeneye.'

How long was that? Ten minutes? An hour? I don't know. I fall, peacefully to sleep.