

The Hole

She dug wildly, frantically; her thoughts, like the dirt, flew in all directions.

What is wrong with you?

She dug for hours, even as her aching fingers began to blister and bleed and her lungs screamed for air. Soon she was kneeling, shovel cast aside and her face and heart shrouded in a heavy darkness.

You're not normal.

She had to hide it. Had to. She had to bury it as deep as she possibly could so that it would never be able to crawl back out and seep its way once again into her being, haunting her like a ghost.

You're a sinner.

Nobody could ever know.

You're a sinner...

But the funny thing was, she didn't get it. Every time she thought about it like this-- working herself into a panicked, ragged frenzy-- she always arrived at the same four words: "I don't get it." Every time she thought about it like this-- face heating and heart pounding as she lay, conflicted and exhausted, next to the gaping hole-- she became torn.

This whole.... concept.... makes me uncomfortable.

Because she knew she had to do this; or, rather, she *should* do this. She just couldn't bring herself to....

Just try being like everyone else.

She. Didn't. Get. It.

It's simple. It's basic biology.

Why? Why her? Why anyone else?

God doesn't make mistakes.

Was there anybody else out there who had to contemplate the same thing so often and with such calculation? What there anyone else who felt the need to bury it in the depths of their being so no one would ever find out? How did they do it? Did they betray themselves, giving in and condemning it to

being a great sin, or did they struggle beside their own hole as she was now, questioning all they'd been told and all they'd come to know?

You can't just make up ways to identify yourself.

Did she deserve the nearly inevitable risk of death looming over her head? Did she deserve the kicks and punches that not only bruised her skin, but blackened and bloodied her heart?

What if you're just dressing this way to harass women?

She could not possibly fathom that this was really such an abomination as "they" made it out to be. This, that she had desperately tried herself to outgrow or even pray away on countless occasions.

I mean, it could be a phase; you'll probably get over it.

She had tried to use the "right" bathrooms. She had avoided the Juniors section at the department stores, no matter how appealing the clothing looked or felt. *She* reluctantly went by "*he*" most days, because in a sense, it was easier than explaining what was really happening.

You look like a guy to me!

So she sat at the edge of her hole, staring down into it. Her criminal act-- no, a miniscule, but simultaneously gargantuan *part* of her-- dangled from the trembling tips of her conflicted mind's fingers, screaming to be granted refuge from the agonizing and constant scrutiny.

You're just trying to get attention.

But after all the questioning; the sheer terror of possibly being found out; the desire to be six feet under mentally, emotionally, and in physical reality; something snapped inside.

A switch flipped.

You're valid.

A pressure released.

I'm like you.

Her heart hammered-- not out of fear now, but out of something else.

You can do this.

She placed her long-hidden desires next to the shovel, and began to fill the hole with her hands. This would be hard, but maybe it was worth it to reveal her authentic self.

Your identity is yours to define.

Someone needed to stand up. Someone needed to vocalize the questions that perpetually tore at her peace of mind, her very sanity, her ability to accept herself as worthy and human. Someone should fight for the fallen and imprisoned and suicidal and suffering while he or she was still more or less alive and more or less free. Someone should fill the holes in which people were unwillingly placing entire aspects of their identities, their humanity.

I'm done hiding. I'm done masquerading as someone I'm not.

Someone should fill those holes with validation.

I feel the same way.

Someone should do something.

Let's rally together.

Why not her?