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Mixed Emotions

Fontaine Baker

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Fontaine, Baker, "Mixed Emotions" (from *Poetic Justice* poetry collection)

She hated to answer her phone;
She hated to open her mail because, almost always, it was a bill collector or bad news
On the other end.

She hated the look of her face,
And how she felt so weak at what was supposed to be the peak of her life.
She hated to cry, as the tears reminded her of years passed by and, even more, of this new battle
she now faced.

She hated that her body ached.
She hated that it sometimes was hard for her to breathe.
She hated knowing that either she'd fight or the end was near.

She hated that she never felt fear, or sorrow, or fulfillment,
But she always felt tired.
Each and every time, she never felt more alive through her pain.

She never complained,
She never chased a dream,
She never knew love,
Or had a boyfriend,
Or a puppy.
She once had a guppy.
But even that fish died.

And in those moments as she watched the fish float face up in the bowl,
She knew that life comes in stages.
First born, then a little life, followed by much death.

She knew that what she felt came from her sickness.
She knew she had to make the best of this situation,
So she embraced it, took hold of it, and danced to her own tune.

So when the doctors called she said, "Fuck you very much. I know, I need chemo!"
And when the bill collector called she said, "Fuck you very much! I owe you hundreds of
thousands of dollars;
I'll add you to my list of things to get to as I fight this other battle."

She learned her mind, and even though her emotions were sometimes twisted,
She decided to grow past the pain and fix it.
She learned to cope, and became a source of hope.
As she found her voice and made a choice to fight to live,
Until she died.

Genre: Poetry

Tags: Cancer; Healthcare; Survival