

“So Many Who I’ve Loved So Dearly”

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I am a firm believer in the idea that soulmates are not someone you’re made for, but rather someone who has been perfectly molded to your form through the erosion of tears and the roots of laughter, just as you have been shaped for them.

Who’s to say that the shaping is predestined, and who’s to say that it truly matters if it is? The only thing that matters is that, sometimes, you’re able to find that person who the world has harshly beaten and lovingly sculpted into a soul that fits perfectly in your arms, into hands that joyfully, willingly, clasp your own.

Your fingers are finally intertwined, red trailing down your arms, tight with passion and desperate hope, and you’re together, and you forget there ever was a time when you weren’t. As far as you know, their heart has always been inked on to your skin. In the pinks and reds of your blush, and in the yellows and greens of the bruises they kiss away.

Your mind is not your own anymore, as though they’ve broken down the walls of your skull with their heart and are burrowing farther and farther into your brain with a steel locket. Time and all its fleeting glory has directed your thoughts towards making sure to buy their favorite cereal, and making their coffee just right even if you think it’s appalling, and remembering to put that song they love on a playlist for when you’re sitting in a hopelessly empty parking lot at 3 AM with a hopelessly, hopefully full heart.

Then, suddenly, you see lyrics of a love song written before the obituaries in your local paper, and you’re coughing on flowers and they look so beautiful painted with the red of your blood that you couldn’t care less that the thorns are tearing through your flesh, so long as your lover receives a lovely bouquet. You know from the holes in your lungs and the holes in your head that if they were ever to leave you, you might just forget what it felt like to love something so deeply that you felt like you could never bleed again, so long as they were there to bleed on.

But now it’s the end. You’ve always known it would go this way, knew it from the second time you met them that you would bend and break yourself to try and fit into their heart, and that the damage was already irreversible.

But even still, the love fills your ribs to the brim, until it feels like it’s boiling out of your chest and your throat and your mouth and you want to scream *I love you I love you I love you!*, but your vocal cords are ripped out by tears before you have the chance.

But that’s just the way love is. How it should be, really. There will always be an ending to it, to suggest anything else is delusional and terribly sad and you can’t spend your limited time in this world being sad when there are much more worthwhile things to be doing.

So take joy in the pain, because it means there is more love yet to come!

Memorize your ending, cradled in the arms of your best friend, your child, your lover, and do it over and over and over again until it’s heartbreaking. Until you are wonderfully broken enough to lay comfortably in their lap and smile at the idea of all your goodbyes.

It means you had a whole lifetime of soulmates.

It means you had a heart to break in the first place.