

## The Dark

Something's eating at me.

And I'm not sure why.

The week from hell ended more than a few days ago and today, all was right with the world. I basked in the warmth of this early October day and felt lucky to be experiencing it one more time before the fall chill sets in. I'm still too far north for summer to last forever. So I made the most of it.

Fast forward to now.

It's early.

It's late.

The weather has turned.

A slight chill rustled in late this evening, and although I knew it was coming, I didn't want to accept it. Weather changes quickly around here at times; similar to my moods. I live my life trying not to get too high or too low, always monitoring my internal state. A flood of emotion rarely rushes over me, for it is the logical side of me that keeps it at bay.

But at this moment, it's different.

Something's in there that I cannot make sense of nor cannot fully draw out.

It's dark.

When I first began thinking about this little writing exercise, I figured that there would be plenty of entries written during the sleepless nights I'd become accustomed to experiencing in recent times. But up until this point, there had been not a single one...

Until now.

As a child, I was always afraid of the dark. I routinely woke from nightmares crying and making a beeline down the hall for my parents' bedroom, never wanting to be placed back in my bed to experience the dark all over again. Once mom and dad figured out it was my fear of the dark that gave me those nightmares, they purchased a few night lights and stationed them in all four corners of my room. Although that helped, it didn't solve my problem entirely. Only after leaving both lamps on in my room each night did I feel safe – safe enough to sleep through the night.

The lights stayed on through my pre-teen years, providing the necessary comfort and security to get me through each night. Soon thereafter, they were no longer necessary. I was, without question, a late bloomer.

I'm very used to the dark now. It has become a friend. To an insomniac, what else could it be?

It envelops me, encircles me, and I welcome its presence. I look to it for answers yet it gives me none. It just sits there, waiting for me to make a move, waiting to clutch me tighter, until it has me immobilized, leaving me no option but to truly acknowledge its presence and submit to it.

Dark.

On this night, it's rearing its ugly head.

Why?

I ask this question repeatedly, yet receive no answer.

Something is eating at me. The dark tells me as much.

But that's all it does.

It offers no insight into what's going on at the core, what's causing this emotional imbalance. It feeds on itself and before I know it, I'm swimming in it. I don't resist, for that does no good, but I try to make sense of it. And in this respect, I come up short.

A cold rain has set in. I can hear it pelting my windows.

It's typical.

The weather gets worse and takes me further down with it. I have no idea when it will end.

The dark came out of nowhere this evening. I just found myself right smack in the middle of it and have no clue how to send it on its way. It just sits there, mocking me; laughing at my every attempt to rationalize it, to explain it away via logic, knowing full well that this will be just another failed attempt at challenging its power. I stare back at it, no longer afraid of what it can do to me, and make my stand.

Pointless.

In the act of wrestling with it for at least a full hour, I finally see it for what it truly is – a part of me.

It's the part of me that I cannot fully explain. This goes way beyond "glass half empty" stuff. This is the part that every now and again brings me down. It's the low beyond low; a feeling of despair or sadness from very deep within that ever so slightly creeps forward and rears up, that lets me know there is something unfinished, unresolved, that hasn't been fully put out of its misery.

Turbulence.

Most likely manifesting in the insomnia of which I frequently wrestle. Inner turbulence on such a subtle level, it's difficult to recognize until after it has already come over me. It's there. Of that much I am certain. But in time, I will make sense of it. For my own sanity, I must.

Some day.

Just not today.

For today, the dark wins. It's got me by the throat and it will do with me what it pleases. It can certainly have its fun, but it can never achieve its end goal of swallowing me whole as it once did in my youth. I won't let it.

I have battled the dark before but this time, it's different. This time, I am no longer afraid.