content warning: addiction and overdose

My faerie friend mentioned how addiction is natural, part of the human experience. Absolutely it is. We both love men who we lost to overdose.

“Civilization always follows the grape,” he saw on the wall of a vineyard.

Do we all need something to take the edge off? Life is brutal. And then for many of us, once we find something that helps, our reward pathways go nuts, and we can’t moderate. We don’t use the comfort in a way that’s balanced. Instead we lose perspective, over indulge, our lives start to malfunction, and the solution becomes a new problem.

We lose sight of the truth. Addiction prevents us from seeing the addiction. Or we can see it, but we can’t stop. Chemicals are us. We’re made of cells—chemical reactions are life.

We add chemicals all the time. Delicious, ripe heirloom tomatoes, dark red, blushed with purple, fragrant and whole. Smelling the roses. A caffeinated drink. Weed in any form. Physical touch, New Relationship Energy, sexual pleasure, sexual release. Alcohol, opioids, kittens, gambling. Shopping, hockey, sugar, crack.

Shame and self-hate get mixed in. When we start hiding what we’re doing, the cycles worsen.

I’m sorry we do that. I’m sorry for how I was harmed as a child by addicted relatives. And I apologize for how I’ve harmed others.

addiction is human

These days, I’m shedding so much of what I accumulated in youth. I’m grateful to have a stable life with Ming, housed indoors. The stability helps me feel safe, so I can let go of harm I used to cling to.

Clinging to harm is so human. Addiction is human, not a strange rarity. Addiction is common.

Thank you for not Othering addicts. If you haven't found yourself addicted yet, maybe one day you will. Addicts aren't the bad people over there. Addiction is a thread through cultures, all through time.

Instead of the word addiction, we might be asked to say "people who abuse substances" or "people who struggle with substances." I like using the word addiction the way I like using the word queer and the word fat.

I love myself just as I am. Nothing disqualifies me from being a valid person. I love you just as you are also. Nothing disqualifies you from being a valid person.

prayer for those who have overdosed

Dear one who crossed to the other side,

I remember you. I hold you in my heart. Always you help motivate me to do what's right. Thank you for all the good you did in the world. I think of the good you did, and I smile.

I'm sorry for how you suffered and strained to stay alive. I'm sorry you were undersupported, and sorry your needs were not met.

May Mother God hold you in her love. May you find peace wherever you are now.

Thank you for reminding us how addiction is human, and people are complex beings who do all sorts of things– joyful and wretched. In pain and crisis, in triumph, and in change. We make art, feed each other, dance, kiss, rage.

You are loved, yet we let you go. We release you to the universe without your body. Now you are free of the cycles which trapped you.

We miss you. We honor your memory and your name.

besos,

Strawberry

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