

**the  
princess  
saves  
herself  
in  
this  
one**

**amanda lovelace**

THE PRINCESS SAVES HERSELF IN THIS ONE  
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**the  
princess  
saves  
herself  
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this  
one**

for the boy who lived.  
thank you for inspiring me to be  
the girl who survived.  
you may have  
a lightning bolt  
to show for it  
but my body is a  
lightning storm.

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here lies  
the raw,  
unpolished,  
& mostly  
disjointed  
pieces of  
my soul.

ah, life—  
the thing  
that happens  
to us  
while we're off  
somewhere else  
blowing on  
dandelions  
& wishing  
ourselves into  
the pages of  
our favorite  
fairy tales.

**once upon a time...**



## **I. the princess**

~~the princess~~ i was born  
a little bookmad.

i could be found stroking  
the spines of my books

while i sat locked alone  
inside my ~~tower~~ bedroom.

all the while, i hoped my books  
would spill their exquisite words

over the lush green carpet  
so i could collect them one by one

& savor them like  
berries inside of my mouth.

- *forever a collector of words.*

when i had  
no friends  
i reached inside  
my beloved  
books  
& sculpted some  
out of  
12 pt  
times new roman.

- & *it was almost good enough.*

~~the queen~~  
my mother  
smiled  
as she offered  
a cube of  
sugar  
in her  
upturned palm.

greedily,  
i accepted.

i reached inside  
my mouth,  
delicately placing one  
(just one)  
on the center  
of my tongue,  
& i clamped  
down.

salt.

that is what abuse is:  
knowing you are  
going to get salt  
but still hoping for sugar  
for nineteen years.

*- you may be gone, but i still have a stomachache.*

one night,  
~~the princess~~  
i  
~~the princess~~  
i  
~~the princess~~  
i

*the princess* woke  
to feel the bed rocking

back & forth  
back & forth

back & forth

back & forth  
back & forth

back & forth

back & forth  
back & forth

back & forth

at first,  
she thought  
a hurricane  
must be brewing—

- *i can't. i'm sorry.*

you should never love  
anything  
more than you love  
your own children.

you should never love  
*anyone*  
more than you love  
your own children.

- *how could you?*

where  
do all the  
memories go,  
the ones we  
hide away  
with  
lock &  
key yet  
continue  
to shape  
us all the  
s a m e?

- *did it really happen if i can't remember it?*

at eleven years old  
the doctor weighed me  
& afterwards,  
my mother told me  
i was too fat  
& that i needed to  
go on a diet  
immediately.  
for an entire year,  
food barely passed  
through my lips.  
i did not even allow myself  
to take a sip of water  
because i wanted to be  
so thin that i  
could blow away  
with the slightest breeze—  
disappear.  
i dropped sixty pounds  
in a few short months  
& i had to wear long sleeves  
to cover up the  
“cat scratches.”

- *everybody told me how good i looked, though.*



“friend request from \_\_\_\_\_”

- a) the girl who said you were ugly.
- b) the girl who said your voice was off-key.
- c) the girl who refused to defend you.
- d) the girl who laughed at you behind your back & to your face.
- e) the girl who took your lunch money every day because she said you didn't need to eat.
- f) the girl who said you were “fat” even after you starved yourself half to death.
- g) the girl who was supposed to be your best friend.
- h) all of the above.**

- *keep pressing ignore, lovely.*

fat  
/fat/  
*adjective*

1. a descriptive word.  
it has no deeper meaning.  
it should not determine  
the worth  
(or lack thereof)  
of a human being.

- *what i know now that i wish i knew then.*

sticks & stones  
never broke

but words  
made me  
starve myself  
until

- *skin & bone.*

my bones,

you could  
see all of them.

my sister & i  
spent our nights  
wishing upon  
the plastic  
glow-in-the-dark  
stars  
plastered to our  
ceiling.

- *we made it after all.*

there  
was never  
enough alcohol  
to keep my mother warm  
in a house  
as cold as  
t h i s.

- *but you kept trying, didn't you?*

there were  
once  
~~six~~ five  
girls  
who  
shared  
every part  
of themselves:

blood  
&  
secrets  
&  
lovers  
&  
even  
a diary.

but  
a girl  
can only  
bleed  
so much  
before she  
meets  
her demise.

*- i'll see you in california.*

how can  
someone  
be  
too young  
to be  
in love  
when we were  
crafted  
from

ocean waves  
& starlight?

- *young love.*

my first kiss:

tackled,  
pinned down,  
a mouth  
repeating  
*no no no.*

after:

bruises  
&  
the unmistakable  
taste of  
blood.

*- i will never forgive you.*



you have  
been the  
star  
of each  
& every  
one of  
my  
nightmares.

- *you left but you stayed.*

i'm sorry  
i wasn't  
the daughter  
you had  
in mind.

- *i only ever wanted to make you proud.*

I.  
blood  
blooming  
underneath  
the stinging  
bite  
of steel.

II.  
the  
once too-tight  
jeans  
hanging  
off  
my body.

- *two unexpected reliefs of a girl.*

it is strange  
how

s  
i  
s  
t  
e  
r  
s

can  
be

s  
a  
v  
i  
o  
r  
s

or

s  
t  
r  
a  
n  
g  
e  
r  
s

&  
sometimes  
a bit of both.

- *sisters*.

- *silence has always been my loudest scream.*

birds  
can't

f l y a w a y

when you  
clip  
one of  
their wings.

you  
weren't  
satisfied  
with just  
clipping  
one of  
my wings.

you tore  
both wings  
out from  
the root  
to make sure  
i could

n e v e r f l y

anywhere  
ever  
again.

- *mother & daughter.*

since  
i couldn't  
have  
my wings,  
i wore  
the  
fake ones  
dipped  
in  
gold  
glitter.

- *a wannabe faerie in converse.*

there came  
a time  
when  
poetry  
showed me  
how to  
bleed  
without  
the demand  
of blood.

- *my most loyal lover.*



i used to think  
i was broken

because  
i never once

spent my  
daydreams

plucking  
swollen pomegranates

from  
someone else's tree.

*- then i learned that society is broken, not me.*

watching  
the house  
that was  
my sanctuary  
& my hell  
go up in  
flames  
was  
bittersweet  
but mostly

just  
sweet.

- *a confession.*

if a house  
does not  
automatically  
make a home,  
then a body  
doesn't  
automatically  
make a home  
either.

- *i've always felt like a stranger in my skin.*

you may  
not have left  
(many) bruises  
on my skin,  
but you left giant  
blackberry bruises  
all over  
my soul.

*- i still wonder who i would have been.*

the princess  
locked herself away  
in the highest tower,  
hoping a knight  
in shining armor  
would come to her  
rescue.

- *i didn't realize i could be my own knight.*

## **II. the damsel**

the damsel  
let the dragons  
swoop down  
& steal her away  
from the ugliness  
of her world.  
unbeknownst to her,  
she was only trading  
one tower  
for another.

- *the wickedest liars of all.*

i'm not scared  
of the monsters

hidden underneath  
my bed.

i'm much more scared  
of the boys

with messy brown hair,  
sleepy eyes,

& mouths  
that only know

how to form  
half-truths.

- *my dragons.*



remember when  
you told me  
you wrote that  
beautiful song  
for me  
& only me—  
your  
“only one”?

*well,*

i'm willing  
to bet  
you don't  
remember  
that you had already  
showed it to me,  
saying it was  
for *her*.

*- you were in love with the idea of love, not me.*

promises  
whispered  
in the rain  
will be washed

a

w

a

y.

- *right down the fucking drain.*

i was the one thing  
he had to deny—  
the beautiful truth  
within his  
terrible lie.

- *who knew such a young heart could shatter?*

when  
my dragon  
with the  
green eyes  
left,

i  
took  
a knife  
& cut off  
all my long,  
pretty hair,  
taking away  
the only thing  
he  
ever  
loved  
about  
me.

- over *before it began.*

“i  
could  
just  
eat  
you  
up.”

- *from the insatiable mouth of the big, bad wolf.*

he loves me.  
he loves me not.

he loves her.  
he loves her not.

he loves me.  
he loves me not.

he loves her.  
he loves her not.

he loves me.  
he loves me not.

he loves her.  
he loves her not.

he loves me.  
he loves me not.

he loves her.  
he loves her not.

he loves me.  
he loves me not.

*- i ran out of petals.*

blood  
runs  
wherever  
his  
fingertips  
graze  
me.

- *my steel & thorns.*

for a time,  
it seemed to me  
that we were

starlight-touched,

failing to  
realize that  
we were actually

star-crossed.

- *the stars were never on our side.*



he was made of fire  
& i was made of ice.

i came too close to  
his flame

& he melted me  
with his embers,

reducing me down  
to a puddle.

with time,  
i froze over again,

but i was never  
quite the same—

a fragile, watery imitation  
of what once was.

- *where was my fear of fire when it came to you?*

“i hate you.”

- *his version of “i love you.”*

when  
it finally  
came  
time for  
him to  
leave,  
he  
packed up  
all my  
poetry  
in a  
suitcase  
& took it  
with  
him.

- *first my heart, then my words.*

he  
promised  
to fix me  
&

more

than i had been  
before.

he left me

s h a t t e r e d

- *but now i've got gold in the cracks.*

i have  
so much love  
to give,  
but no one  
ever wants  
it.

- *a cup overfilled.*

if  
love  
is a  
battlefield,  
then i  
must have  
forgotten  
all of  
my armor  
at  
home.

*- a war i never agreed to fight.*

i spent  
my dreams  
picking  
my teeth  
out of  
the  
carpet.

- *what does dream dictionary say?*

my  
mom  
told the  
nice doctor  
she was seeing  
starbursts  
in her eyes  
& they were  
almost  
beautiful  
to her—  
like the  
fourth of  
july  
had decided  
to come  
early.

the doctor  
hesitated  
before  
breaking the news  
to her.

“those aren’t  
stars.

it’s cancer.”

- *40 years a smoker.*



it was  
while we were  
drinking our  
usual  
late night  
coffee.  
without  
a tremble  
in that  
gravelly voice  
of hers,  
she turned  
to me  
& said  
her last  
dying wish  
was for me  
to spread her ashes  
over the ocean  
so she could  
finally go  
back  
home.

- *a mermaid escapist.*

when your mother  
begins to forget  
your name,  
you begin  
to wonder  
if you exist  
at all.

- *stage 4, terminal.*

irony:  
when your  
healthy  
& intelligent  
& strikingly  
beautiful  
sister dies  
less than  
a month  
before  
your terminally ill  
mother.

- *nobody realized you were just as sick.*

minutes  
before  
your mother  
made the  
death call,

i  
smelled  
your  
warm vanilla  
perfume

& my  
mouth  
filled with  
the taste  
of dirt.

- *death is one of the senses.*

children are not  
meant to die  
before their  
parents.

i was not  
meant to grow  
older than  
my oldest sister.

we were meant  
to be  
four sisters,  
not three.

you were not meant  
to be a can of ashes  
on your mother's  
bedside table.

after all,  
you were the one  
who always burned  
the brightest.

- *fate is a fucking lie.*

the worst  
part is never  
being able  
to know  
if it was a

s u i c i d e

or not.

- *the truth will free me.*

she  
once  
made a  
promise  
to  
save  
me

when  
all  
along

we  
should have  
been  
saving  
her  
from  
herself.

- *please come back.*

sister—  
wherever  
you are now,  
i hope there is  
a beach.

- *starfish will always remind me of you.*



fuck you,  
cancer,

for taking away  
the possibility

of the mother  
i will never

ever get to  
have now.

- 11/03/10.

your  
death certificate  
makes  
the claim  
that  
you died on  
november 3<sup>rd</sup>  
at 3:03 AM.  
that is a  
lie.  
you died  
long  
before that.

- *3 isn't my lucky number anymore.*

when  
a loved one  
dies,  
they say  
you should  
open a window  
to let out  
that final  
wheezing  
breath  
so their soul  
can  
be  
set free,  
but hers is  
still here  
with me.  
night  
after night  
after night,  
she pounds  
her fists  
on the walls  
of my dreams,  
begging for  
me to tell  
her  
the way

out.

- *the other side.*

one funeral:

tears of grief  
for a life lost  
too young,  
too soon—  
a tragedy.

the other:

tears of relief  
for a suffering  
that lasted  
far too long—  
a mercy.

- & yet *both hollowed me out.*

for the  
better half  
of a year  
i was terrified  
every time  
the phone rang  
in case  
it was another  
death call.

- *3 more would come.*

everyone i love leaves.

how many  
funerals can  
someone attend  
before they turn  
nineteen?

- *the cursed family*.

grief  
clung to  
her  
like an  
old,  
itchy,  
faded,  
ill-fitting,  
hand-me-down  
dress.



death

wound

itself

around

her

bones

like

a

piece

of

red

ribbon.

i never  
expected  
death  
to be my most  
faithful companion,  
but she is  
the only one  
who will come  
without  
having to be  
asked.

- *the only one who will never leave.*

is  
there  
such a  
thing  
as  
dead  
mother's day?

months after  
my mom  
died,  
i found the book  
she was  
reading  
last  
with a yellowing  
receipt  
still tucked inside,  
marking her place,  
& it finally  
hit me

you  
will never  
get to finish  
this particular book  
you will never  
get to start  
or finish  
another book  
ever again  
you will never  
get to see me  
graduate  
from college  
you will never  
meet the love  
of my life  
you will never  
be there for my  
wedding  
you will never  
read these words  
we will never  
ever ever ever

sit on the back porch  
& swap ghost stories  
over steaming  
coffee mugs  
ever  
ever  
ever  
again.

she  
won't  
stop  
haunting  
me.

- *my ghost.*

he  
won't  
stop  
hunting  
me.

- *my ghost II.*

fuck the idea  
that there is  
such a thing  
as destiny,  
that there exists  
some kind of  
mysterious master plan,  
that there is a god who  
simply  
does not  
give us anything  
we cannot  
handle.

the pain  
did not  
make me  
a better person.  
it did not  
teach me not to  
take anything  
for granted.  
it did not  
teach me anything  
except how  
to be afraid  
to love anyone.

i am  
far too  
young  
to be so  
goddamn  
broken  
&  
if i could go back  
in time



& give  
myself  
her childhood  
back,

i would.

- *what was the point?*

maybe  
i find it  
so hard to  
believe in

heaven

because  
i don't know  
if there

will be  
poetry

there.

- *legitimate concerns of a mortal.*

i had a  
big smile  
on my face  
as i burned  
the bridges  
to all the things  
i could not  
repair.

- *does the smoke still choke you?*

it took

losing him  
to finally  
find  
myself.

it took

losing him  
a second time  
to be sure  
of myself.

that

was my  
first act  
of  
self-love.

*- i would thank you, but we both know you don't deserve it.*

who would  
i have  
been without  
the inspiration  
behind my

demons?

- *probably not a poet.*

i am  
caught between  
mourning  
you

&

thinking  
your death  
saved  
me.

- *will you ever be able to forgive me?*

the princess  
jumped from  
the tower  
& she  
learned  
that she  
could fly  
all along.

- *she never needed those wings.*

### **III. the queen**



once upon  
a time,  
the princess  
rose from the ashes  
her dragon lovers  
made of her  
&  
crowned  
herself  
the  
mother-fucking  
queen of  
herself.

- *how's that for a happily ever after?*

in my  
mind's eye  
i always see you  
sitting by yourself  
at the kitchen table,  
smoking your cigarette  
& drinking your coffee  
& wanting to be  
anywhere else  
but here  
with  
us.

- *were you set free?*

maybe  
we will meet again  
in another place—  
a place where  
forgiveness grows  
as lovely as  
the tomatoes  
used to grow  
in your  
garden.

- *the shiny red hope that gets me through late nights.*

when  
my mother  
died  
i finally  
got to  
meet  
my father,  
who i  
had seen  
every day  
for  
nineteen  
years.

it's true  
what they  
say:  
the weight  
of  
shared  
grief  
can either  
bring you  
together  
or  
drive  
you apart.

*- it's never too late for a relationship.*

when you choose  
to sit upon a  
throne  
made up of  
lies

&  
the bodies  
of the people who  
mistakenly thought  
they could

t  
r  
u  
s  
t

you,  
the only  
thing left  
to do  
is

f  
a  
l  
l.

*- but i bet it was fun while it lasted.*

what ever  
will you do  
when everyone  
stops believing  
your  
red lipstick  
stained  
lies?

- *friends can break your heart, too.*

i bet  
you regret  
making  
an enemy  
out of  
me.

- *1 back, 2 knives.*

i wonder  
how many times  
you touched her  
& had to  
pretend  
it was  
me.

- *does it still sting?*



i hope you  
treat her better  
than you  
ever  
treated me.

- *you can have my forgiveness, but you can't have me.*

please  
believe me  
when i say  
revenge  
was  
never  
my intention.

- *but it still tastes sweeter than honey.*

you      the  
brought    needle  
& i brought the thread.  
we meant to mend our  
two broken hearts,  
but we ended up  
stitching them  
togeth  
er.

if he was  
my cup of tea,  
then you are  
my cup of  
coffee.

tea simply  
isn't  
enough  
for me  
sometimes,

but  
coffee  
can get me  
through  
anything.

- *did i make you up?*

before he left,  
he wrapped my heart  
in layers of  
briars & barbed wire  
to make sure  
that no one else  
could ever get in,  
but you were  
more than willing  
to bloody  
your hands  
for me.

- *you never even got pricked.*

his talent:

he never  
once  
had to use  
his hands  
to touch  
each & every  
part of  
me.

- *he could touch me across highways.*

somehow,  
my soul  
knew  
your soul  
before we  
ever  
met.

- *it was like coming home after a long, long day.*

1.     he calls me  
gorgeous.
2.     he reads  
all my  
favorite books  
& then  
asks for  
more.
3.     he knows  
exactly how  
to make my coffee.  
("light & sweet,  
just like you," i  
always joke to him.)
4.     he asks me  
how i am doing  
every single day  
& he  
genuinely  
cares to hear  
the answer.
5.     best of all,  
i know he will  
still love me  
when he  
wakes up  
tomorrow morning.

- 5 things you made me think weren't possible.



i say to him,

“we will always  
have our octobers.

- *even when everything else fades.*”

he  
opened me up  
like a book  
& poured the  
poetry  
back into  
me.

- *my personal pen & paper.*

a list of red things:

- I. his hair.
- II. our lips.
- III. my nails.
- IV. our breath.
- V. my sheets.

- *worth the wait.*

flowers  
grow  
wherever  
his  
fingertips  
graze  
me.

- *my sun & rain.*

t  
h  
i  
s  
:

you & me,  
a fading october afternoon,  
the biting chill filling up the air,  
noses turning rosy at the tips,  
drinking our too-sweet coffees,  
pinkies hooked together,  
forgetting everything  
& everyone else.  
this, this,  
this.

- 10/13/12

he is  
even better  
than books.

- *fiction has nothing on you.*

i am so glad  
we were born  
during the same  
lifetime.

- *i may not believe in fate, but i believe in you.*

his smile makes my bones ache.

- *a pain i welcome.*



when i see  
your light pieces  
with  
my dark pieces,  
i begin to  
understand why  
they say  
opposites attract.

- *chiaroscuro*.

i am so sorry  
for all the times  
the

darkling  
dragon  
demon

living inside  
my darkest  
corners  
came  
roaring out,  
flames ready,  
hell-bent  
on  
extinguishing

all the light  
in you.

- *please don't leave.*

the constellation  
of stars

s c a t t e r e d

across his  
back  
is the  
map  
that guides me  
home  
each time  
i find myself  
lost.

- *you are my home.*

he  
did not  
teach me  
how  
to love  
myself,  
but he  
was  
the bridge  
that  
helped me  
get

here.

*- i thank the universe every day for you.*

he walked  
me down  
the bridge  
marked with  
our names,  
got down  
on one  
knee,  
& opened up  
my favorite  
book—  
the one  
with the  
beautiful princess  
& her own  
beloved book  
on the cover.

inside,  
i found

a tiny,  
perfect,  
amethyst  
hope.

- 't will *forever keep*.

i  
let myself  
know  
that my life  
doesn't  
have to be over  
just because  
theirs are  
& i went  
ahead  
& painted  
the sun  
back into  
my sky.

*- i am allowed to live my life.*

“what are you  
going to do with your  
english degree?”

~~“i plan to  
crack open  
the skulls of the  
masses  
& plant  
a colorful  
garden  
in every  
brain.”~~

~~“i am  
going to lace  
together  
a necklace  
of words  
for everyone  
i meet.”~~

~~“for once  
in my life  
i am going  
to make sure  
someone finally  
hears  
me.”~~

“i don’t know.”

- & *it’s okay not to know.*

fiction:

the ocean  
i dive  
headfirst  
into  
when i  
can  
no longer  
breathe  
in  
reality.

- *a mermaid escapist II.*



i would like to eat  
one meal  
without feeling

ashamed.

- *healing is ongoing.*

all of the oceans  
& galaxies  
did not  
conspire together to  
create me  
just so i could  
reproduce for  
you.

- *startling fact #1.*

if i ever  
have a  
daughter,  
the first  
thing  
i will  
teach her  
to love  
will be  
the word  
“no”  
&  
i will  
not  
let her feel  
guilty  
for using  
it.

- “no” is short for “fuck off.”

i am  
a tigress  
who has earned  
her softer-than-velvet  
stripes.

- *an ode to my stretchmarks.*

i am  
a lioness  
who is no longer  
afraid to let the world  
hear her  
roar.

- *an ode to me.*

when i die,  
do not  
waste  
a minute  
mourning me.  
i may go,  
but i will  
leave behind  
all my  
thousand & one  
lives.

- *a bookmad girl never dies.*

i  
hope  
you  
can find it  
in your  
heart  
to be  
proud  
of the  
woman  
i have become  
in spite  
of  
you.

*- still hoping for sugar instead of salt.*

i will  
take the  
blood-tipped  
thorns  
they  
stuck  
in you  
&  
from  
them  
i will  
teach you  
how to  
weave  
together  
the crown  
you  
deserve.

*- you are stronger than i will ever know.*



**IV. you**

raid your library.  
read everything  
you can get your  
hands on  
& then  
some.

go on,  
collect words  
& polish them up  
until they shine  
like starlight  
in your  
palm.

make words  
your finest weapons—  
a gold-hilted sword  
to cut your  
enemies

d

o

w

n.

- *a survival plan of sorts.*

trees  
have words  
the wind  
cannot carry,  
so we must  
write  
on them  
their stories  
until there are  
none left  
for them  
to tell.

- *write the story.*

write the story.

push  
your hands  
into the dirtiest  
parts of yourself.

take the  
rot & decay  
& turn it into  
nourishment & life.

water it  
& sing to it  
& show it  
sunlight.

grow a beautiful garden  
from your aching  
& teach yourself  
how to thrive from it.

write your story.

- *the sign you've been waiting for.*

1. fill in the blank:

a) poetry is \_\_\_\_\_.

- *anything you want it to be.*

when you live  
in new york  
or new jersey

it is almost  
a rite of passage  
when someone  
jumps in front  
of your train.

the first thought  
is always,  
“i’m going to be  
late for work.”  
it is never,  
“what a tragedy  
she felt that  
there was no  
other way out.”

but it is.  
it is a fucking  
tragedy  
when  
the world  
does not stop  
for you  
even when  
you give it  
every last  
drop of your  
blood.

*- i never learned your name, but you mattered to me.*

there is not  
enough  
rain water  
in all  
the skies  
to rinse  
the  
innocent  
blood  
from  
your hands.

- *their lives will always matter.*

a  
world  
where all

human beings  
are taken care of

shouldn't be called

a "revolutionary"  
way of life

& yet  
it is.

- *burn.*



if you  
don't want to  
end up in  
someone else's  
poem,  
then maybe  
you should

start  
treating  
people  
better  
for  
a  
change.

- *an unapologetic poet.*

emily—  
i often  
find myself  
wondering  
if you are still  
out there  
with lanterns,  
looking for  
yourself.

is sylvia there  
with you,  
guiding  
the way by  
the old  
brag  
of her  
beating  
heart?

does  
virginia  
have  
a room  
all her own?  
& what about  
harriet  
& anne  
& harper?

does  
a woman  
ever  
find  
her peace?  
is death  
our only

feather-covered  
hope?

- *i'll be there with matches.*

your hips  
will try to burst  
through your skin.

your thighs  
will try to grow together  
like a mermaid's tail.

a soft garden  
will try to sprout  
on your legs.

(& between your legs,  
on your upper lip,  
on your armpits, etc.)

no, you are  
not just here to be  
sexy for him.

the world begins  
& ends  
when you say so.

- *what they don't want you to know.*

food  
is  
not  
the  
enemy.

- *society is.*

i'm  
pretty sure  
you have

s t a r d u s t

running  
through  
those

v e i n s.

- *women are some kind of magic.*

you  
are not  
obligated  
to have  
children  
just because  
your body  
has that  
capability.

you  
are so  
so  
so  
much more  
than the  
possibility  
of  
children.

you give  
birth  
to oceans

every  
single  
day.

- *your friendly neighborhood man-hater & child-eater.*

be a  
mermaid.

be a mermaid  
who doesn't settle  
for making a  
small splash.

be a  
mermaid  
who doesn't  
stop until she makes  
tidal waves.

be a  
mermaid  
who knows to  
stop before  
she devastates  
the world with her  
tsunamis.

- *don't allow the world to take your kindness.*



you  
did  
absolutely  
nothing  
to  
deserve  
it.

- *fuck rape culture.*

repeat after me:

you owe

no one

your

forgiveness.

- *except maybe yourself.*

the love  
some girls  
have for  
other girls  
is  
so gentle  
& so soft  
& so fucking  
beautiful,  
&  
these girls  
deserve  
to have  
better stories  
than the ones  
where they  
are murdered  
because they love  
with too much  
of their  
hearts.

- *love is never a weakness.*

the only thing  
required  
to be  
a woman  
is to  
identify  
as one.

- *period, end of story.*

your happiness  
comes before  
anyone else's  
happiness.

- *the real meaning of "self-respect."*

just because  
they don't  
hit you  
doesn't mean it  
isn't  
abuse.

wouldn't you  
think it  
a crime  
to look up  
at  
the night sky  
& tell  
the stars  
that they have  
no sparkle?

guess what?  
you shine  
brighter  
than all the  
starlight  
there has  
ever been  
or ever  
will be.

- *emotional abuse is still abuse.*

you deserve  
someone  
who makes  
you feel  
like the  
otherworldly  
creature  
you are.

- *yourself*.

be wary  
of the boys who  
only ever tell  
half-truths  
because they  
will only ever be  
half in love  
with you.

- *slay those dragons.*



when  
someone  
offers to  
save you  
make it  
your mission  
to

save yourself.

- *i believe in you.*

**the end.**

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## about the author

amanda lovelace is a poetess & storyteller whose words have been shared in her local coffee shop & her tumblr blogs. she currently lives in new jersey with her fiancé. she received her A.A. in english literature from brookdale community college in 2014. as of 2016, she is working toward her B.A. in english literature & sociology at kean university. what she will do next, nobody knows—not even her. for now, you can find her reading anything she can get her hands on, writing while she should probably be paying attention in class, thinking about writing but not actually writing, drinking an inordinate amount of coffee, & blogging about books. on top of all this she is a lover of all things cat-related as well as a staunch mermaid enthusiast. she considers herself to be a feminist & a social justice advocate. you can also find her as *ladybookmad* on twitter, instagram, & tumblr.