

Metamorphosis
By Lexie Manion

If it wasn't for your oh-so-careful charismatic checking out, like a hurried guest with heavy luggage and a heart so vacant,
I may have come out of my lowly cocoon sooner.
You see, I wrapped myself up in this sea of blankets to watch the TV show I have seen for the hundredth time and pick at the remnants of food from takeout boxes for the tenth time,
Surrounded by an oasis of suffering in a meek attempt to cope with your scarcity of hope.
I was trying to protect myself.
Your gaze overlooks my present fighting self just to undermine my future potential,
As if your departure from compassion was non-consequential.

You pick and choose who receives kindness.
What I wish you would understand is that we do not pick and choose illness.
We are given this life from nature and nurture.
It's a curse and a blessing, but most importantly, a choiceless matter.
My nature is empathy, running deep in the earth like roots of a tree — far and wide as the naked eye could see.
Perhaps nurture could teach you some valuable lessons.

I, the enigma of your pointed shame,
Fight for an end to this; for I am the window that emits the light colorizing a once dismal room.
Where you cast shadows on who I am,
I will splash the vibrancy of hope on all that we can be.
I will emerge anew.
I will butterfly for me — not for you.
I hear new words from old souls: "*I understand*" and "*I believe in you*".

I emerge, wings timidly wavering and wilted.
Give me time and I will bravely open up, my arms speckled with good four-letter words protecting my delicate yet daring heart.
"*Home*", "*heal*" and "*hope*" paint the cocooned a brand new day.
Let this be a lesson to those battling in the darkness:
We will fly again.