

Comes With Rules

By Cole Capriotti

Being male comes with rules,
Being male comes with the rule that I have to know sports more than I know how to heal
Being male comes with the rule that I have to get my hands messy and not confess how I feel;
Being male comes with the rule that I can't be real with the ones I love;
Being male comes with the rule that I'm just like her ex because "all men are the same";
Being male comes with the rule that I have to compress my emotions into a tiny box never to be seen
Because being male comes with rules

Being male comes with self evaluation
Being male comes with crippling expectation;
Being male comes with "Be a man" a phrase that makes me want to tear myself apart;
Being male comes with a forced silence as you struggle
Because being male comes with rules .

Being male comes with the rule that says I can't have anxiety because I didn't serve my country
Being male comes with the rule that if I am depressed I am weak
Being male come with the rule that I can't cry and if I seek out help then I am pathetic;
Being male comes with the rule that I can't start a poem with Being MENTALLY ILL comes with rules
Because being male comes with rules .

Being male comes with the rule that I have to accept that I am destined to be one of 22.4 per 100,000;
Being male comes with the rule that only then are my fellow men allowed to be empathic,
Because being male comes with predetermined rules.