

The soul¹ is a scary thing, it is who we are beyond our flesh and our skeletal structures. Our souls are the life behind our dreams, behind our laughs, behind our tears. The soul is what yearns for connection, so wouldn't it make sense that we each have someone out there that could make our soul complete? Someone who could ease our pain and end that constant need for such a true love?

As a little girl I always wanted to be Cinderella. Maybe because of her beautiful yellow blonde hair and her blue gown with matching gloves, or maybe because of the true love that emerged when her foot fit that glass slipper. That became the type of love I desired from then on; the type of love that became the fairy tale I've made for myself, the fairy tale I try to believe in. As the tale goes, I'll be married and happy and finally feel loved. Loved by the man, who my heart has been searching for. The soulmate² that truly is my other half. But I've begun to wonder if that fairy tale is more destructive than it is an idyllic dream.

5/23/01

He was born at 5:37 a.m. in a hospital with big windows and a rising sun just beyond them. He is shocked by the spinning world as his beautiful glassy eyes open and are revealed to the wonders all around him. A stuffed puppy dog placed beside his waist, he is taken home by parents that shower him with love. Unaware of what awaits him, he believes his birth is the most magical day of his life as he sleeps softly swaddled in a blanket.

3/19/12

She walks home from school at 3 o'clock like she has done for the past year. The sun is out, the wind is blowing and so she walks quickly. She keeps her eyes focused on her feet, believing that if she watches them she'll end up walking faster. She intentionally skips over the cracks because

¹ According to the website Lonerwolf, a soul is described as, "the immaterial essence and totality of who you are at a core level-it is your true nature."

² The concept of soulmates dates back to ancient Greece, when Plato theorized that humans initially were born with 4 arms, 4 legs, and one head with two faces. As the story goes, Zeus was intimidated by this and split the bodies in half. Those two halves then spent the rest of their lives searching for the other to make them whole again. Aristophanes explains the meeting of those two halves, "the pair are lost in an amazement of love and friendship and intimacy, and one will not be out of the other's sight."

what good could come from stepping on one? But then she does, she steps on one splitting a square right down the middle. The sidewalk is newly paved so this seems out of place and she wonders what could even cause such a crack. But she begins to realize she feels like the sidewalk in a sense, wanting to connect with her other half. She's always had this feeling that she's strong and independent but that she isn't quite complete. That something has always been missing.

8/12/17

The screen door slams behind him as he runs down the front steps. He is running from the silence of the house, the absence of his mother. Running from the pain, running from the broken memories. He runs to escape that he can't remember what his mother's hug feels like. They tell him she left because of the marriage, that he was not the reason she ran. But he tells himself she ran because she saw no reason to stay. He says it's because he wasn't good enough, wasn't worthy of love and never would be.

11/3/17

She sits in front of a mirror, tears rolling down her cheeks late on a Tuesday night. She wanted to believe the best in everyone. She wanted to believe that someone would only want her for her heart, for her soul. She desperately hopes for a love that's strong and real. She knows it's out there she just needs to find it.

2/9/18

She wakes up cold from the cracked window near her bed, her hair still wet from the night before. She walks outside with a feeling in her feet that it's just another Friday, just another end to just another week. And she doesn't know it but her heart flutters through each class, through every single second of that Friday because the end of it brings something very special.

His head feels heavy and the loud voices they slur together, they blur together. He walks in laughing with friends on both sides, seems like he's happy to be there. But he spots the corner of the couch almost immediately and sits, happy to be seen by nobody. And so he sits there; he sits

as people come and go, like in one of those movies where the time passes and everything except that one person moves to and fro. And then he see-

She only knows the one friend she walks in with but she is happy to be in a house full of people that don't know her. She busies herself by meeting new people, stopping at the bathroom, getting a drink and then she sees him. She sees the way his humble hands rest in his lap; she sees the way his gaze longs for something meaningful. She has this feeling that she's seen him before, that she knows him. Each step she takes towards him she feels even more comfortable, and then he looks up. He looks up with those same beautiful glassy eyes and this time they are revealed to the one piece that's been missing. On this spinning Friday night in the corner of a 30 year old family home he saw her and he began to believe in love again. As they sat there and talked, the magic they were surrounded by on their very first day of life resurfaced. The two were born again through each other and the yearning in their hearts was calmed and their desires for love fell away because they had found each other.

Maybe that little love story is yours, or your teacher's, or your neighbor's. Whoever it belongs to, it reminds us that there really is such a thing as true love. Humans are wired to love one another because we need connection to survive.³ We are made to keep each other alive. I believe that everyone has a soulmate, someone that makes them complete. It's just a matter of believing in that and believing in yourself.

³ According to Psychotherapist Dan Roberts, the human need for connection is in our DNA, comparable to those for food and water. Infants are born helpless, completely reliant on some to love and care for them.