



"Tell It To The Barbell"

We go crazy if we don't tell our stories, our fears, and our secrets.

This is the source of madness: the unsprung spring. Untold stories bubble inside you, and not in a gentle way. You feel like you are drowning, because your story is everywhere inside you and nowhere outside you. And a dammed story is for the damned. That water will eventually kill you. You must break the dam.

To avoid this fate that you do not want (believe me, you do not want it, even if you have spent years convincing yourself that you do), you must talk. Some folks talk to friends, some people talk to pets, some talk to the page, and the religious talk to God. Do whatever you need to, but tell your story to someone. Rosanne Cash has a great line: "When you're a broken bird, tell Heaven."

But, if you are not religious (or even if you are), I offer this:

Tell the barbell.

Tell it with your muscle and your sinew and your tendons and your synapses. And your slow reflexes that established at birth that athletic domination would never be yours. Tell the barbell.

Tell who you hate (because you do, although you try so hard not to).

Tell why you can't yet forgive. (Be honest.)

Tell whose voodoo doll you still want to stick with the sharp pins, again and again. (We are all human. The desire should not be confused with the act.)

Tell whose voice you still want to hear over your shoulder, suddenly in your air and space, crowding your own sense of you, their hot breath seeming to completely warm your cold being, in a way they never knew because you never ever told them and you should have, oh you should have, why didn't you tell them?

Tell your hurt, your pain, your anguish, your burdens. Tell it all. Put it into the steel and the rubber. Then lift it all from the floor to your shoulders and overhead.

Raise your burdens as high as you can reach, sink under the weight of them, feel their dominion over you. Know they could crush you.

Realize all of this.

Then let them drop. See your burdens freefall through the air, and plunge. Let the bar drop. Let it hit the ground. See it bounce up. Stand back so it does not hurt you, but guide it with your hands so that it does not hurt anyone else.

And let it clatter onto the ground.

It has no meaning -- it is just steel and rubber -- unless you pick it up again. Same as your pain and anger. **Don't pick it up again.** You are more intelligent than that. **Leave your burdens where they lay.**

Walk away. Out into the world. Let the door shut behind you.

See only the sun, and feel the incredible lightness of your own footsteps.

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