



*Still
and
Always*

GROWING

Poetry Honoring
the Inner Child

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To my inner child and all fellow cycle-breakers.

About this Book

I am at my most vulnerable and, at the same time, my most empowered self when I am writing.

The contents of this poetry book reflect my journey of growth. It means the journey to finding peace, happiness, and love amidst the chaos of life.

Growing up in a background like mine, where most of the people in the society are crippled by poverty and conditioned not to recognize their and others' emotional needs in order to survive, we normalize disconnecting from ourselves and neglecting the starvation of emotional connection. Family dynamics can easily be toxic, creating unhealthy bonds and behaviors that we rarely speak about. Experiencing such disconnection as children hinders our growth. The dismissal or unawareness of the patterns we are part of and the invalidation of our own emotional experience result in a dark, isolated, and hopeless adulthood filled with so much guilt and shame. It is this cycle of unprocessed emotions that leads to the multigenerational trauma that makes us feel stuck in so many ways.

It is never easy admitting and opening up about our traumas as children; it is, in fact, the most vulnerable subject of our lives, and sometimes we don't even realize this until later. Discussing the most impactful moments of our lives and the most complex emotions they brought us requires a lot of presence and safety. I believe so many of us struggle in creating space for the wide spectrum of emotions we feel as human beings, and even more so when it comes to the ones we label as negative or bad. Yet, there is a powerful and beautiful transformation that happens when we share our internal world with others. We spark a connection when we start advocating for our emotions and embodying our truths.

Only by allowing ourselves to be vulnerable enough to examine ourselves and the society we live in can we move forward and grow together. This way, we can create our own identity and community, one that is based on growth and freedom. This way, we heal.

This book is an embodiment of my reconnection with my inner child. It is who I am in pieces, pieces that I have collected to make myself whole again in the process of owning my story. This is me normalizing all the complicated emotions we go

through growing up and breaking free from the chains of shame. This is me opening up about my struggles during childhood and my journey to adulthood—reflections of experiences that helped shape who I am and where I am today.

There will be a lot of references to nature as it has been vital to my healing. I've also included affirmations, journal prompts, and certain guides and tools as a way to encourage you to dive into your own inner world and heal as you read.

This book is for all the people who feel or have felt different from those they grew up with and loved. To the ones who have sensitive hearts, to the ones who are aware of the generational trauma they're surrounded by, to the ones who are doing their best, to the point of sacrifice, to help people around them or to make their parents proud, and to the ones who most of the time go unnoticed and neglected. To those who are choosing to break the cycles of pain and suffering, to those who are taking the road less traveled, to those who are mostly misunderstood, to those on paths of healing, to those who are strong and brave: I hope you find this book as a form of validation, support, and rest.

I hope each page embraces you with warmth.

I hope, one day, you too can find the courage to own your story and grow as the person you're meant to be: Free and Happy.

Chapter 1
The Awakening

We are all stories waiting to be told.

Be Here, Despite it All

For what is life without struggle
Hope and dreams are born in pain
In misery, we start to trust
In heaviness, we try to step forward
Looking for something better
Life is beautiful because it ends
There is fulfillment in loss
There is success in failures
Meaning is found during the searching
We are exactly who are supposed to be
We are exactly where we should be
We are exactly what we are already
In the present, we are defined.

In Paper, She is Limitless

There is a girl who lives
in her head
where
time is infinite.
Everything is possible.
Matters
expanding,
collapsing...
Like the universe.
Like a god,
She creates.

A Poem is Just a Poem Until...

You read the words, and they melt in your mouth
you read them out loud to realize you can't continue
yet the taste already stays in your tongue
they are bitter, sweet, and sour.
Crawling and digging unto your throat
they find their way into your veins and then into your heart.
And there creates a pool so clear.
So clear, it reflects who you are—
Your greatest desires, deepest thoughts,
unconscious emotions, unforgettable memories.
Fast-forwarded recordings of a life you cannot escape,
skipping images of who you've been and who you are,
and a faint projection of who you will be.
It's holy water that mirrors the wounds you sealed,
a drop of lemon to those you left open,
and a void to pass through so you can be where you want to be.
The words may have started somewhere else,
and they came from somebody else
yet, the poem is for you.
So you can dive into it
and come out of it
more alive than you did before it reached you.
A poem is just a poem
(Only words)
until it becomes a shared experience.
A poem is just a poem
(Only lines and verses)
until it hurts and burns you to death,
then resurrects and enlightens you.
A poem is just a poem
until the artist has found her art
and the art has found its purpose.

*We are all open throats
And the world pours poison.*

*Go
find
- yourself -
the cure*

My Emotions Parade

My feelings,
usually a gallant masquerade,
have turned into a sudden cascade
filling me in— suffocating.
My heart is drowning
in a raging sea of emotions
gasping for air in contortions
Breathe— I can't breathe.
My hands reaching out for saving and light
they're like strings in the midst of a mighty
tornado of harrowing events of chaos
no go-betweens, no liaisons.
I'm a crumpled paper on a floor during a stampede
bleeding— bleed, bleed, bleed
From heavy stomps of sentiments
I (try to) lament
from rushing of burning passion
(this aggression)
from deafening echoes of the past
(please, please don't last!)
my fragile heart is trying to survive
my courage, forever alive
I'm going to get through this
it's within reach, I know, Peace.

There is Healing in Suffering Together

There is healing in suffering together,
a growing tree won't survive the storm
without the existing ground,
and the soil will erode with the rain
without the trees' roots
binding it...

Both sip in the waters.

We can't run away from sorrow,
for doing so will just bring more,
and if we can't run away from pain,
at least, let us hold each other while we feel,
for there is strength in holding each other's hands.

There is comfort in crying together.
There is peace knowing we are not alone.

On Vulnerability

We're all born
naked,
and vulnerable
and no!
'That doesn't mean we're weak.
it is
our pureness,
our essence.

(I am a garden full of roses
I can fill
a whole room with my petals,
yet, if it's my essence you want,
I'd fit in a perfume bottle.
I am not
who I am with my thorns
I am the scent
that reminds you
of your passion—
love.)

Our vulnerability
is our humanity.
Under thousands of years
of conditioning
a façade of power and strength
we built as
Empires
of the greatest
and still
they fell,
felt pain,
and passed.

Yet, no!
Death isn't what makes us
vulnerable
It's everything
in between
-the spaces in time-
and the feelings we carry.

Emotions
and our consciousness:
Ever-changing.
Once we allow ourselves
To be open
-ly
Vulnerable.