Nonbinary Shenanigans

Terrence Adams

Abstract

This is a poetry/mixed media/collage piece representing my gender journey. I utilize nonlinear storytelling, code poetry, and intentional omission to take control over a narrative that has previously controlled me. I use mixed pronouns (I/he/them/you/me/she) to refer to a variety of characters that might all just be myself and I define functions without discussing much of the inner workings. These are fragmentary glances into varying viewpoints on my gender, my femininity, my masculinity, my sexuality. Glances into my Madness and how it is not something to fear but is integral to understanding how I interpret myself and the world around me. Many of these words are from my journals, my notes app, scraps of paper I scribbled something furiously on while feeling something so intensely—I hope you like it, I guess, and I hope you see yourself in some of the fragments. Every colour and scrap of paper is coming from a place of deep intention, though not always the same place. I do not always know where the intention is coming from, or what exactly the intention is. I feel it deeply, though, and hope you do too.

Content Warnings:
dissociation, mental illness, psychiatry, slur reclamation, sexual assault

Keywords

poetry, collage, nonlinear narrative, gender identity,
we interrupt this program to do a quirky algorithmic analysis of your life since becoming unwell. It’s ok that you don’t remember XXXX and XXXXXX, your doctor called you complex, remember? Don’t worry, I’ll keep track of it for you. I’ll organize it all and then it’s up to you to make it happen on the itch is back — every iteration that cascades into an under-utilized pilot seat contributes new convolutions. I love you and you’ll never be too much for me. Someone else knows the origin of my pain. They say it’s just signals to the brain but when I can’t feel normal normal normal normal normal. I feel normal normal normal normal normal normal. 

I procrastinate more than my mind can interpolate and the words lose meaning the moment they leave my mind. Did the anti-psychotics help or hinder my gender? They forced me to pass for normal to reduce the variable chemistry the already sensitive brain could experience. Is the scientist in me/her/them/it and you should only see one manipulated variable and the XXXXXX suggests I’d be/he’d be/he wouldn’t they’d be! It’d be good all going all that out………what is it called when you’re both too much and not enough? Is that gender? Is it a part of it? Is it a narrow and long strip? With no horses compatibility. Is it divided? You can’t see me. I’m too much. You can’t endeavor to provide care to someone as XXX as me/j/m/they/them/it who’s the jib? And it’s just not up to you whether or not I feel helped I do love how the corset keeps my muscles from flying into a flurry.

My hair is longer than what kept me alive before. hrt.

The madness is so comfortable I slip into it through her and them and sometimes mine. The thought gets weighed down by the — I feel like nothing will ever fit me better than what I have. I’m only one who’s worn these bones and I am — they’ll fall of dumb fuck.

serendipity...
When I first cut my hair I was hesitant to go short. I wasn’t quite sure how to articulate what I wanted, nor certain I was ready to give up the memories held within cells. The notion was unpalatable as most things are, like why you’ll sit in a restorative yoga pose and apply lip balm for 3+ min.

```cpp
void hair_situation(int age){
  if(2020){
    diy();
  } else if(age > 13 age < 20 && hairTouchingEars == TRUE){
    freak(out);
    physical_dys4ia++;
  } else {
    findHairElasticsOrBobbyPins();
    shakeHeadInTheMirror();
  }
  //
  // HAIR GROWS
  // Hair grows
  // They remind me
  // And I’m reminded myself
  // As I check old photos and realize
  // My hair hasn’t touched my ears since
  // I was a little girl and the pigtails
  // I can make now
  // can’t be pulled on by men.
  transjoy++;
Liminal: Proceedings of the Second Annual Critical Femininities Conference
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References


Author Biography

Terrence Adams (they/them) is a Mad non-binary poet, black belt, and radio host for a queer show living in Treaty 6 territory and region 4 of the Métis nation of Alberta. They are currently studying their undergrad in computer science and English, and hope to combine those topics in further education and research.