

I feel like I'm not allowed to exist.

Bathrooms that tell me that I have to choose a gender that doesn't fit with me. Half-assed gender neutral bathrooms added as an after thought on the 4th floor are offensive. This tells me that no one wants to see me. That they don't want me to exist. Administration doesn't care that I exist. "He or She" is spit out in class at a constant, unaware of how much that pangs my heart. I'm always expected to correct people because they just assume I'm something I'm definitely not.

I'm exhausted, but I'm not allowed to be because I have to keep correcting people. People already assume that I don't exist, I only exist to them when I make it clear I exist. I have constant fears of not being allowed in spaces, of being killed or raped for my existence, but no one thinks about it. I tremble and swallow anxiety every time I introduce myself to someone because I'm terrified of what they'll think but I refuse to surrender my identity. I'm terrified of a world that is killing trans people at a startling rate. I'm terrified of a school that doesn't care that I exist. Because I'm not allowed to exist in this society.

Sometimes, I feel like I'm not allowed to just exist.

My very existence is a political statement. I'm always so brave for speaking up for my own rights, for some respect. "Thank you for your service." I am compared to a veteran. I fight in a war where my dead name is a pile of bullets fired at me, where the wrong pronouns are bombs, and my family and everyone around me are the enemy. I'm alone in my trench, holding onto my pronouns. I have "allies" but they don't live here in this trench. They don't live in the shit and pain. I've already cried multiple times over my god damn gender. The allies don't feel the spurn of a dead name, of those bullets. Because they don't have those bullets pointed towards them, they never will. They're allowed to go into the enemy trench whenever they want to. When it's too much.

If I want to visit the enemy trench, I have to let myself get shot and blown up, walking over no man's land because I won't exist anymore. I'll be an empty shell, pierced with my deadname and the wrong pronouns. And I'll go into the enemy's trench and they'll accept me, but I won't be there. Everything about me will be killed while I crossF.

I'm an animal behind glass, everyone looking at and only being aware of me when I hit the glass in my own frustrations. I hit that glass with everything I have. But there's always someone who doesn't know what I am but makes an incorrect guess anyway. I can't do anything to help it because my ally, the zookeeper that's supposed to help me, is helping another exhibit. I'm alone.

My name plaque portrays "a real live transgender."

People stare.

People ignore.

People forget I'm there until I ram into the glass, tell them about something they never thought of before. Then they think they're such good allies because they've learned something new. They eventually need to learn another new thing, or say something else offensive. And we must repeat.

No one knows the pain I exist in.

I don't feel the pain of a man. I've never been one. I no longer feel the pain of a woman. I'm not one. I'm not in-between. I'm not a gender, I'm agender. I'm a rock, I'm bacteria, I'm a tree, I'm not a human. I am forced to come out in every single space I exist in because everyone assumes who I am. I used to stay quiet and let it happen. But my wounds are bleeding, I'm hurting. I'm dying. I can't let myself keep getting hit, but it's so hard.

I'm so tired.

Sometimes I want to give up.

Maybe if I'm not supposed to exist I just won't exist anymore.

Is it worth it to fight every second of every minute of every day just to get recognition? To be treated like a fucking human being? People are more willing to correct the pronouns of a dog, of a baby. More likely to correct themselves on the difference between a jacket and a hoodie. I'm less than an object. I'm a waste of money, a waste of space.

I'm dying in the trenches.

And no amount of being brave and you being thankful for my existence is going to solve anything. Ahead of me is a life full of me taking a beating so other trans kids don't have to. My entire life will be getting beaten and bloody and dying in my trench full of shit. Even when I legally change my name, it will follow me to my grave. I'm already exhausted, but I have to be the strong one. I imagine myself crying a lot, my cat the only one that understands me because, dammit, cats don't have genders either.

Sometimes I just want to exist in a trans-only space, where cis people aren't allowed. But that's rude, that's not being inclusive.

Well fuck it if I want to be allowed to exist somewhere. Fuck it if I want to be recognized and loved without having to explain myself. Fuck it if I want respect without having to earn it. Fuck it if I want a place where I'm not expected to be straight and cis. Fuck it if I want to go to the goddamn bathroom without making a fucking sacrifice. Fuck it if I want to stop feeling pain. Fuck it if I want something stronger than a cishet ally flitting between the trenches. Fuck it if I need a place to sob and cry about how hard it is and knowing everyone will just naturally get it. Fuck it if I want to be in a space that I don't need to leave because I feel safe for once in my life. Fuck it if I want to survive past 35, when all the statistics say I'm going to die. Fuck it if I want to exist.

Fuck it.