



death comes in threes

work stemming from a near fatal car accident

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for my car or my life

I was invincible, you know
nothing could happen to me because nothing did

I never once had the chance to grasp
that anything ever happened to me

it wasn't until after the hospital,
an endless stream of weeks.
moving to another house
with unexpected people

put all of my belongings in storage,
my car was gone

face the facts, girl

was I expected to go through this?

insurance companies wouldn't fix the car
they gave me enough money
for my time, but not
for my life

who is going to pay me
for all I have lost

no one apologizes to me
and I'm expected to forgive
I was angry
I had to resign myself to losing anything I valued

there was nothing I could do

I was invincible, you know
nothing could happen to me because nothing did
but I was in the intensive care unit
I was on a respirator
and I survived it

I could hope that time heals all wounds
that's what people keep telling me
ask me in a few years
if I forgot
and everything is better

True Happiness in the New Millennium

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
I'm the new savior the savior of science
the savior of strength
the savior of survival
survival of the fittest
survival of the best
and I'm here to tell you we're starting anew
so fasten your seat belts
hang on to your hats
place your seat trays in their upright and locked position
for it's a bumpy ride, and I'll tell you why

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
the millennium of reason and logic and strength
and I don't want to hear about your self-destruction
I don't want to hear your whining, psychosis,
your depression, suicide, alcohol and drugs
and just what made you think that playing with needles
and escape would make things better somehow
God, I've always hated needles anyway
what is it with you people

well, you need a leader and I'm stepping up to the plate
you keep asking for a big brother and I'm here to set you straight
you want someone to wipe your noses for you
well, pick up the damn tissue and do it yourself
because when you give up your rights, you take away mine

and we're not having any of that

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
and you say to me you need crystal meth
 so you can stay awake through work
and you say to me that you don't need to drink,
 that you just like the taste
and you say to me that with all your escapism
 you still don't feel any better
and you say to me that sometimes suicide
 is the only answer

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
I'm here to usher in a whole new generation
so stop asking for things and start working for things
because X is for ecstasy as long as it's fast
and X is for extra but there's always a cost
and ecstasy doesn't come without extra work
no matter how many corners you cut
and you know, X is for X-Ray and I see right through that

they say that Eve ate from the tree from knowledge
but you know, she shouldn't have stopped just then
cause the loggers are raping the trees of knowledge
the loggers are raping the forests of talent
the forests of ability the forests of reason
of skill of logic preserverance and life
we're letting them rape the forests of excellence
and you know it's now time to take it all back
because I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
and I'm here to tell you how it's going to be done

you're looking for peace in all the wrong places
you're asking your leaders to save you from yourself
but your leaders are losers and they're worse off than you

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
where it's time to take charge and it's time fess up

only you can deliver you from your own sins
but first you must know what sin really is

it's time to make choices and it's time to lay claim
to everything we've been blindly giving away
because I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
take charge of yourself, and I'll take charge of me
I'm my leader, not yours, so wipe your own damn noses

take it in to your hands, people, mold your own tools
this is the new millennium, and this is your chance
because no one should be showing us how to fail
people mastered that feat a millennia ago
so set your own rules and do something fast
cause it's time to take charge and it's time to be alive

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
And I'm waiting for you to usher in yours
Because true happiness this way lies, my friend
and I won't wait long if you lag behind
cause I'm setting my rules so step out of my way

I'm here to tell you there's a new sensation
and I'm here to tell you there's a new salvation
and that true happiness this way lies

The One At Mardi Gras

i was at mardi gras last weekend
and i got a bunch of beads from parades
(no, i didn't lift my shirt for them) -

and a friend of mine had a balcony
on bourbon street, and so we were on it
on friday night, and the swarms

of people stretched for over a mile. it was
a mob, no one could walk and the crowd
just kind of carried them along. and all

the men expected women to get naked
for them for beads, and from my balcony
i would see every few minutes a series of

flash pops, coupled with a roar from the
crowd, and i knew a woman lifted her shirt
for the screaming masses. i refused, however,

to strip for drunk strangers, when i knew
they all expected me to, being on a balcony
and all. so men would look up at me and stretch

out their arms, looking up inquisitively, as
if to ask either for me to give them beads
or for me to strip. and since i wasn't stripping

and had plenty of my own beads, i decided to turn the tables and see if men would accept the same conditions they asked of these women.

when they looked up at me for something, i would say, “drop your pants.” they would look up at me, confused, because the women are the

ones that are supposed to be stripping, but in general i got two responses from the men: either they would look at me like i was

crazy and walk away, or they would shrug, as if to say, “okay,” and then they would start unzipping their pants. then they would

make a gesture to turn around, as if to ask, “do you want to see my butt?” and that’s when i’d yell, “the front,” and then they’d turn back

around, with their pants and their underwear at their knees, and start moving their hips (which i never asked for, by the way).

so over the course of the evening i managed to get at least twenty men to strip like this for me, and i was amazed

that there was this society, this micro-cosm of society, that allowed this kind of debauchery in the streets, a sort of

prostitution-for-plastic-beads form of capitalism. so i was reveling in this bizarre annual ritual when this man, average to

everyone else, wearing grey and minding his own business, decided to look up at me. so

i asked him to drop his pants, and instead of

disgustedly leaving or willingly obliging
he crossed both hands on his chest and looked
up at me, as if to ask, “you want to me do

what? you naughty, naughty girl.” and he
smiled and looked up at me, and it occurred
to me that i finally found someone in this

massive crowd that thinks they way i do.
now, new orleans has a population, from what i
hear, of about one million, but during mardi gras

there are about nine or ten million people, and
all i could think was that of all these people
here, i finally found someone who wouldn't

blindly do what i asked, but at the same time
wouldn't think i was crazy for asking.
of course as i looked at him i also happened

to think that he was stunning, by far the best-
looking man i had seen that entire night, he
looked like he had style, like he was self-

confident, but then again, i'm near-sighted
and was on a balcony drunk at mardi gras.
we hit an impasse when he wouldn't strip

and neither would i, so his attention was
eventually diverted to other balconies. but i
noticed for that next half-hour that he never left

from under my balcony, and every once in a while
he would still turn around and look up at me. oh,
boy, i was thinking the entire time, i know

this is no way to start a relationship, hell,
i'm sure this guy lives nowhere near me, and
i haven't even had a real conversation with him,

but he's damn near perfect. and all that time we
were screaming and partying at mardi gras,
he would still occasionally turn around and

make sure i was still there. and finally he
looked at me, signalling that he had to move
on with his friends, and i held up my index

finger to make him wait and then i threw
a bunch of beads at him. part of me threw
them because he was a good sport, putting

up with my taunting and still not giving in,
but a part of me threw them because i
saw in him the strong values and the sense

of self-worth, the sheer love of life, the
desire to be alive, that i possessed all along
and have always longed for in someone else.

Princess Diana, 1 Year Later

what is it like to lead a near-perfect life
to have servants clean up after you
to prepare all of your meals

what is it like to then hate everyone
including yourself

don't eat food
without throwing up or gaining weight

what is it like to not leave your home
because you might be photographed

what is it like to have anything you want
and you still can't have anything you want

is that what it is like to be royalty
to feel important all the time
could they ever feel anything other than their pain

you hear from everyone that you were perfect
and you still tell yourself you were nothing

when you felt this way, **daily**,
would you love yourself or hate yourself
what would win the daily battle

Death comes in waves of threes

As strange as this sounds, that was sort of the second death in my trip I encountered.

Have you ever heard people say that death usually comes in threes? It's a strange thing to say, but when something terrible happens like that, you can almost expect over a short time that these waves of death can come a few times.

Almost to make sure you get the point.

The Morning of July Eleventh

I don't remember what happened the day of my quote-unquote death, death number three. It was just a day, a normal summer day, a day like any other. I remember seeing the fireworks for the 4th of July in Chicago on the street with my roommate Eugene, and I remember that I was wearing a white shirt and it started to rain, so I had to lean my body so my shoulders were at Eugene's back so I wouldn't get drenched with my white shirt. It was Saturday, July Eleventh, and I apparently was going over to my parent's house, where my sister Sandy lived, to go swimming because it was sunny. After Getting on the Kennedy, It took I55 southwest of Chicago and exited route 45 South so I could drive the suburbs and see my family.

The rest of the accounts came from eyewitnesses.

That and what the people at the hospital told my mother.

I was at the intersection of 95th and route 45; I was at the end of a line of people waiting at a red light. The light had just turned green, but you know how long it takes for people to get moving when the light changes, we were still sitting there waiting to get moving just as the light changed.

Now at that point in the road, the intersection was at the bottom of a hill, and if you are coming south toward the intersection you'll see the light before you'll see the street.

This apparently was the case for the driver of a sedan, he apparently saw the green light and continued speeding on the 55 mile per hour road.

As I said, I was at the end of the line of cars. So I would get caught in the crossfire.

Accounts state that there was a motorcyclist in front of me, and a van in front of him.

Eyewitnesses said they saw me looking at my rear-view mirror in my car,

I must have seen this speeding car coming towards me.

I couldn't move my car into the empty left lane next to me, there was no room. I could only guess that I turned the wheels of my car to the left so that I wouldn't run into the motorcyclist, who I'm sure would have died from being hit.

Originally, in part, I got away by traveling. But apparently after waiting to get away again, this time from some stranger in a car, I was struck. and all went black.

Twelve Thirty, July Eleventh

So what happened was that this speeding car hit the back of my car, knocking me into oncoming traffic because my wheels were turned. A van from the opposite lane of traffic then hit my front passenger-side corner and dragged my car for a bit.

Police accounts said that there were skid marks from my car tires for one hundred and eight feet.

Yeah, well, how was that second driver to know someone would appear in front of him as he was driving?

Yeah, how can you blame him.

To brake the news to my mother, they had to rummage through what things they could find of mine from the car, rummage through the pockets of my clothing, my purse was buried under the seat, so they got a phone number, and they called, and my mother answered.

"Do you know someone who drives a red sedan?" they asked.

"Yes, I do," my mother answered. "Did something happen to her?"

The hospital chaplain informed her there was an accident and they

would like her to come and identify a body.

Yes, identify a body.

My mother got off the phone to rush to the hospital, she was sure I was dead.

When my mother and my sister arrived at the hospital, my mother was thrilled when they walked into the room and saw me with tons of tubes sticking out all around me. “She’s not dead!” my mother exclaimed, as they went to see me lying unconscious.

My mother even commented that I looked so nice there. She said I looked nice because I even had eye make-up on.

My sister had to tell her that I wasn’t wearing make-up; that I had two black eyes.

I was unconscious for eleven days, the coma lasted two weeks.

The day of the crash they wanted to be sure no one else was in the car with me, because there was metal and car parts from the passenger side of the car jutting all the way to where I was sitting as I drove. For all intents and purposes, the passenger seat was **gone**.

Which might explain the injuries on the right side of my head. They kept a monitor on my skull for the end of my unconscious spell to monitor the amount of fluid around my brain. I have a little indentation in my forehead, at my hairline, from having that attached to my head.

You know, for my own good.

I was told that I had no broken limbs, but three skull fractures, they even had to make sure they all set properly because one on my forehead, on this side here, had to set properly so my right eye wouldn’t have any problems.

*In every car accident, there
are actually three crashes.*

In every car accident, there are actually three crashes.

The first is when one car hits another one.

The second is when the outside of the human body hits the interior of the car.

The third is when, within the human body, organs crash into each other, and crash into your own bones.

Their Crutches

should they tell you in advance what it's like
to go through what you're about to go through?
having an operation
they'll keep you drugged
you'll be unconscious, in a hospital bed
for longer than you want
 but this is what's best for you,
 that's what they tell you
be tired of being in the hospital
no one will know what to say
 you need rest, you need help
 even if you're sure you don't need their crutches
it won't be easy
I'm sure that I'll visit
and I'm sure you'll be fine
I know you'll want to hear that

Elvira Doe

Shortly after I regained consciousness, my family told me they were slightly concerned, for two reasons.

One was that since they couldn't find identification on me when I was first brought in, instead of calling me **Jane Doe** they nick-named me **Elvira Doe**. The second thing they noticed was that the people in the hospital handed back all my dirty, disheveled, ripped up, torn cloths, and the only thing that was missing was a bra.

Fences and Straight Jackets

So as I start to regain consciousness, I'm stuck in there at Christ Hospital, and I want to get out. I remember one of the first chances I had to leave, I was lying in bed, they expected me to sleep there, I was probably barely conscious, I doubt could even stand, but I tried to get out of bed and I fell out of bed and the nurses had to come get me, and they had to call my parents, I was fine, but it was their policy to call. But because they were afraid of me falling again, they put a metal bar around the side of my bed, I don't know, it was like a guard rail to keep pedestrians away from something dangerous, or a zoo fence so people could feel safe while they watched the trapped animal they have on display for you. So they had this metal rail around my bed, but that wasn't the worst part, they also put a harness on me at night, a straight jacket, so to speak, probably so that I wouldn't be able to use my arms to help me leave.

They kept a wrist band with my stats on it on my wrist, so that if I wandered off they'd know where I belonged, to keep me in place. I hated that damn wrist band, I'd rip it off probably almost daily, and they had to make a new one and strap it on me.

You know, to know where I belong.

Wrapping up the Harness

I don't know why they had to keep a straight jacket... i mean, a harness on me, were they trying to keep me in place? Once I regained enough of my consciousness back all I could wonder was, is this how they were trying to

stop me? I just wanted to be able to sleep the night through without being restricted, without my arms being bound. I finally managed to contort myself out of it one night, not so I would escape, but just so I could feel more sane in this place. The next morning the nurses didn't know why the harness was wrapped up on my night stand. My mother saw it wrapped up there and knew that I had to have done that, and she had to think that if I as that cunning enough, I must be getting better.

Someone Give Me the Answers

my dictionary is older than my schooling
my encyclopedia set is older than I am

I've been looking for answers to what
I thought were simple questions and the
people who are supposed to be smart
don't know what to say

when I regained consciousness,
I was given the same meal three times a day
I was physically strapped to my bed

no one helped me, even then

from

Sometimes It's Not

sometimes I wish I could
turn back the hands of time
maybe then I might still think
that I could live forever then

Hallucinations

So yeah, I was just **loving** being in that hospital, trapped in that room, I imagined I was actually at my apartment and not in a hospital bed. I even *talked* about this, and my sister, not wanting me to hallucinate, told me,

“Okay, you say the bathroom is just past the door,
(*which was my hospital room door*),
why don’t you show it to me.”

And so I’d walk out the hospital door and
look down the hall,
and I was stunned,
this wasn’t right, I thought,
and I stood there for a split second,
and I said,
well,
it was here.

Imagining Friends and Loved Ones

Day in and day out I would stay in that hospital room, and I was really going nuts ... I imagined my friend Brian, who now lives in San Francisco, becoming my roommate, dressing up as an old lady so no one would recognize him and no one would think that he was my friend visiting me, so that I would have someone there to talk to when I was sitting there all alone, all by myself, day in and day out.

No, my friend Brian never visited me, and I *did* have an old lady for a roommate, and no, I never talked to her, but I kept thinking to myself that

this was how I could keep myself sane,
by imagining that a stranger was a friend,
just so I could get through my days.

Imagining Dave

And I was never able to get over Dave's death, where he died three months before my death ... and I wasn't able to get across the country for his funeral, so I could never see his face to say goodbye to him. So, I would fantasize, I think, oh him appearing at my room, coming in through a side entrance so no one would see him, and he would come up to visit me, and I would say,

“How did you get here, you're supposed to be dead, did everyone see you”

and he said, “no, no, no, I managed to hid so no one would spot me because no one knows I'm alive. But I wanted to know how you were doing, because I didn't want anything to happen to you, and I wanted you to be okay, and I wanted you to not die.”

Will Be Just Fine

there's a pot on my window sill
terra-cotta, i think
and it used to have a spider plant in it
once
now there's just a pile of dirt
shaped like a terra cotta pot
with a few dried stems
coming out of the top

i could never take care
of anything, you know

and is this what has happened
to me

could someone find me again
hold me in their arms
rock me like a baby
stroke my hair
and tell me everything
will be just fine

They Wouldn't Trust Me with a Razor

After being in the hospital so long, my hair was growing long, I never even got to shave my legs even, I was completely unkept. I wanted to at least be able to shave my legs in the shower, but they wouldn't trust me with a razor.

I had to have a family member watch me, just so I could take a shower and try to get myself in order.

No One Gave Me Flowers

One day, in what seemed like an endless stream of weeks, I got flowers, and I was stunned, I was thrilled, no one had sent me flowers before while I was here in the hospital, I didn't know who they were from.

When we looked at the card, they were flowers for a **Janet Spinoto**, a woman who apparently was somewhere else in the hospital, and I thought, that's what I get for thinking that someone would buy me flowers.

As I Recovered

After the hospital, after I
got out of the coma, no one
even visited me - no one
that did this to me visited me.
Not the people who hit me, not the guy
who's life I saved. Did he even know
I saved his life? Did he even know
he could have been dead that day?
None of those people even attempted to
pay me back. For my car,
or my time, or my coma. This is what
I get for being nice. I have the
physical and emotional scars
from that day. And
no one ever apologized to me
for the pain they caused. None of them
even visited me as I recovered.

Any Help At All

I'm tired
of doing things myself and
I'm tired
of looking for my own answers
for all the troubles I experience
I'm tired
of looking
I want someone to help on this one

in the past,
with my head on my shoulders
they got tired
of looking in my direction
to see if I needed anything

now I can't get any help at all

Get It Over With

sometimes you just forget life
what you're living life for
life passes you by
you've got nothing to show for the years

do I have another 60 plus years of this to go
of forgetting
of not being missed

When I almost died, I didn't think about death
I had to get better
I had to teach myself how to eat
and walk
and talk
I had to get out of that wheelchair
and people can make fun of me for it

but they don't have to start from scratch
they don't have to start with nothing

Even when some of us
think we have it all together
someone throws us the curve ball
of death to tell us that we might have
been wrong, that we might not have
been prepared for everything

How do you prepare for something like
this, though

Like My Motto

It is so easy to hope for things
It is easy when you've got nothing
to hope for something

at times I just get tired of fighting
the ideologies that exist everywhere else in the world
I figure that no one is listening to me and
I figure that this whole hope thing
is over, well,
overdone
over-rated
overly confusing
... over-something

so I'm wondering that if
I'm getting tired of fighting it, well,
why am I even fighting any of this?
everyone has been stepping all over me,
so why don't I just get used to
the whole cycle

I've got treadmarks on my back
from the bicycles and motorcycles and cars
all running me over
and there are heel marks and toe prints
as people were using me as their stepping stool
to climb the corporate ladder

my face is now covered with soot
because every time I try
to clean myself off
someone fights me

and steps on me
and pushes my cheek into the asphalt again

strands of my hair are matted into my face now
into my mouth
almost touching my eye
and this is the cycle, I think,
this is the way it goes
so stop fighting, girl
stop fighting
get used to it

these are the words
I have to keep telling myself
until they are like my motto

Being God

I'm tired of dying for your sins
over and over again and why is it that
I am the one that's doing the dying
when you are the one that's doing the sinning
I don't think you're learning your lesson

I'm tired of taking this knife to my hands
over and over again giving myself the stigmata
the blood gets all over my clothes
and I can never get the stains out
and for what, for you to see how I suffer

I'm tired of being humble when I'm
supposed to be the one with the power
over and over again I become your servant
and never are you bowing to me
I don't even get a thank you

I'm tired of preaching to the converted
when the converted aren't even really listening
they're snoring in the back rows while I
deliver my sermon and there's not even air
conditioning in here and I'm sweating

I'm tired of coming to you and healing the sick
taking away the problems, over and over again
giving you something to look forward to
and all I have is an eternity of waiting for
someone to take my place and tend to my wounds

I'm tired of giving the earth up to you
watching the devil's work be done, and you know,
he's just sitting down there looking at me

and laughing, over and over again because it's
so easy for him when he doesn't have to work

I'm tired of being your salvation
over and over again you turn to me
and I have no one to turn to but myself
it's a bitch, you know, being your own god
since no one can save me from me

I'm tired of being your teacher, handing you
what you need on a silver platter and waiting
for that damn collection plate and someone
is always stealing out of it from the back row
I know who you are, you who leave me nothing

I'm tired of wearing this crown of thorns
over and over again the needles prick my skin
and even gods bleed, at least this one does
and when I ask you to wipe the blood
out of my eyes, well, I can't see you anywhere

I'm tired of being something for everybody
when everyone is nothing for me
maybe the devil has the right idea, you know
maybe I'll sit back and wait for you miss me
as you wonder who's your messiah now



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