

Bibliotherapy

Lauren Seal

The Doctors called me malnourished
 a waifish wraith.
They livened me with liquids
medicated my mind and
crowded me with calories
in every attempt to make me alive.
But the more my body became
 the less
 I became
until I was nothing more than an expanding
 hulk of a person.
Although I could not escape my all too physical
physiology
my frighteningly fattening form
my mind escaped the madhouse
 by burrowing into books

I escaped into words.
Wound them round my wounded heart
until it could beat without gushing ache.
I turned to *Tolkien* when I needed bravery
Barrie when I wished for wonder
I read *Riordan* on the days I needed friends
and when I felt
 monstrous pain
 monstrous sadness
 monstrous anger
at the world and myself,
I found like company
 with *King* and his monsters.

I injected texts intramuscularly.
Gulped down poems and prose
and felt the medicinal metaphors
the pharmaceutical fairytales
heal my oh-so hungry soul.
I read as if one starved.

 Which
 I guess I was.
Not for food but
for a reality more real more
comforting
than the one I had.

And when my veins became so infused
with words
 they bled ink,
when the paper-thin pages of my self were
tenuously bound,
I tiptoed
back into the world.
Water-damaged
worn
but legible nonetheless

*This poem was previously published in Volume 1
of the [Capital City Press Anthology](#).*

