

A Conversation with Grief

By: Jaritza Ramirez

I need no introduction - you instinctively know who I am.

I will walk with you your whole life.

There is no end date, no expiration.

I eagerly peer around every corner, ready to meet with you.

Just when you forget - *there I'll be.*

Shove me under the rug and I'll leave a lump, poised to trip you up.

You say I'm imprisoning you, but I take no prisoners, only *partners.*

You can't avoid me forever.

'It's been a year'. Society says you're 'fine'. *But I say otherwise.*

Where did those tears come from? *That would be me.*

I tirelessly beg and plead to be released, but you keep me in a cage, in a box: 'out of sight, out of mind'.

Fortunately for you, I can take any form I please – *you can't file me away.*

At first I will absolutely consume you, on the brink of drowning.

Eventually I release my grip, letting you come up for air.

But this is part of my 'schtick', if you will – letting you *think* I've passed.

That's what you don't understand: I will loosen my grip, but I will never let go completely.

What I represent is too big to be ignored, too important.

I stand in the fragile gap between what *was* and what *will be.*

I'm delicate, like the finest china, yet as fierce as a roaring lion.

Keeping yourself busy? I have a knack for inserting myself into the 'busy'.

You're always turning my volume down but I'm the one in control of the dial.

All I want is my voice to be heard. To matter, to be spoken of.

What are you so afraid of?

You worry you'll look irrational – *I am irrational.*

You worry you'll be perceived as weak - *I need you at your weakest.*

Move on, you say? Impossible. You and I will always share the same address.

It's so unfair! *Yes, let it out.*

This is your 'new normal'. *Fury rises like a phoenix.*

Operate in the stillness. *Allow me to wash over you.*

The pain explodes like cuts from a thousand tiny shards of glass.

You are left reeling, staggering, taken aback, reliving the horror and heartbreak.

It's too much, it's too raw, it's too...*real.*

But then – miraculously – you feel it.

A release.

Your breath.

You were holding it – weren't you?

Doesn't it feel better to breathe?

Take my hand and hold tightly.

This lifelong journey is better when we operate as *partners.*

Not enemies. Not rivals.

Partners.

You and I are on the *same team.*

I know I've been painted as a threat, but how is that possible when I'm so deeply intertwined with you?

My goal all along has been *permission.*

Permission to live out in the open, not in the shadows.

I'm all you have left of the love.

And if I'm all you have left – why do repeatedly shove me down?

The choice is yours: take my hand in harmony or continue as opponents.

I stand rapt in anticipation, awaiting your choice.