

I'm different. I can see demons. You can't, can you? Ever since my mind was capable of rational thought I've seen them.

Living with demons; it's indescribable. Most of the time, they crawl along the ground behind me. They never seem to leave my shadow, always there. Sometimes, they jump on my arms, riding on my shoulders. Their touch feels like hot needles ripping and piercing my skin. After a while, you get used to it, I guess. They don't speak; their filthy blackish green mouths are stitched together. Their eyes are large, milky white pools, blind, open with shock. They are grotesque.

Up until the age of fourteen I lived an extremely sheltered life. My mother was incapable of looking after me so I became independent. However, I rarely left the house and I never knew what the outside world was like. Until one day, my mum disappeared. She was gone. So I was left on the streets. I watched people passing by day by day, realizing that I was not the only one with demons. I began to wonder why only I could see them. Then I realized. I am different.

I noticed that the people I saw with demons looked at me often, almost as if they could see my demons too. However, the ones without, well, for them I was simply another homeless beggar.

I don't know when I figured it out, it was liked I always knew it. People with demons are evil. Watching television for the first time, the terrorists' mug shots filled the screen. Their demons cast dark shadows upon them. They had many more than me, I had only three.

I tried to forget about it, I was moved into a care home after I was found on the streets. The kids there were twisted bullies. They cornered me one night soon after I arrived, taunting and trying to provoke me. They tried to act tough, it pissed me off. They pushed me against the wall, with their hands around my throat. My demons became restless, anticipating a fight: a bloody one.

It was then that I lost control. With unimaginable strength I pushed them off, grabbing a knife from my tormentor's hands. The tables were turned. Without thinking, I leapt forward, stabbing the air. No, it wasn't the air. There was a block against my knife. I pulled it back, and stabbed again. Again this block was resisting my knife. I dropped it, and as if watching from afar, I saw my tormentor on his knees, clutching his belly in agony. I had never seen this much blood. Ever. I looked at my hands; they were covered in the vile red liquid. What had I done?! I turned and ran. I couldn't bear to hear the screams, to face what I'd done.

This wasn't happening! I must be dreaming. I was unable to accept this cruel reality. I could not believe what I had let myself do. I knew that what I did, I couldn't have stopped myself, I couldn't help it. This monster has always been

within me, and now it has reared its ugly head. I knew that this was only the beginning.

I turned to look at my demons, their hands also covered in blood. Their obscene mouths were now twisted into grimaces, sinister smiles. There were four now. I ran out side into the rainy darkness, crying. The rain washed away the blood, but it could not wash away the pain and realisation of what I'd done, what I'd become. I buried my head in my hands, sobbing.

Suddenly, I felt someone's hand on my shoulder, at first I thought it was my demons, but then I heard a voice, calming me. I was speechless.

"C'mon boy." The voice said.

"You are confused, I know. These demons we have to bear are a burden. You remind me of myself. Let me explain to you what is going on. You don't need to speak." I nodded miserably, and then slumped to sit on the wet pavement. I heard the man shift to join me.

"The ones with demons are evil. But, having demons does not mean you cannot be good. Listen to me; there are ways by which you can be rid of them." I raised my head, hopefully. I could not make him out; the rain and the mist formed an inky black curtain, preventing my vision. He continued his monologue. I listened attentively.

"You must realise who you truly are. Your destiny decides it all. If you are fated to be evil, you will soon realize that being as you are is not so bad. However, if you are fated to be good, your demons will gradually fade away and leave you be. Remember, being good means happy ignorance, you will be oblivious to people's true natures. You are vulnerable to deception. However, being evil may mean living with demons, but you will be wise and will understand out world more than others. Think carefully, my friend."

I looked up, only to find myself alone again. I stood up and shouted.

"I want to stay with my demons!!" I screamed at the sky until my voice was hoarse. It felt good. But demons were slipping away from me, they were fading into oblivion. Why? What? How? I wanted them! Don't leave! I screamed, again and again, to no avail. They were gone.

I spent that night outside in the rain and cold. I did not care. The next morning, I took my own life.

Catherine Adams & Hattie Wu