

Title	Michael Thomas Rupprecht	03/08/2023
	by Michael Rupprecht in Napa County Poet Laureate - 2023	id. 35886837
	<div></div> <div>Napa, California</div> <div>94558</div> <div>CA</div> <div>United States</div> <div></div> <div>@gmail.com</div>	

Original Submission	03/08/2023
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Applicant Full Name	Michael Thomas Rupprecht
Email Address	<div></div> @gmail.com
Check to Confirm:	Applicant is 18 years or older Applicant's primary residence is in Napa County, CA Applicant has a profile on CreativeDirectoryNapaValley.com
Phone:	<div></div>
Street Address:	<div></div>
Mailing Address (if different from Street Address):	n/a

Why do you want to be the Poet Laureate?

I've been writing poetry since I was 13 as a means to break down the issues that mattered most to myself and my peers. Sometimes I found it difficult to find the words to speak on the topics that mattered dearly to me. I sought to do just that; to find the words, the words to say what I knew I needed to say.

My writing has helped me, to say the least. I live with different chemical imbalances as many people do, and my poems were my sword and shield on days when OCD and depression tried to get the better of me. I would write and write to bring my problems to the light so I could see them clearly for what they really were. For that, I am forever thankful for poetry, for being a weapon against forces of darkness in my life.

To this day, I still write constantly, My peers look forward to my work, I would imagine due to the unflinchingly realistic approach I take to the problems we all face, without fear. I do this because, without brave souls in this world who have been writing about their struggles completely honestly, I wouldn't have found the words to help myself on the road to healing. I wish to do that for others, I wish to write more poems that people can read and know that they are not alone. Easier said than done, but it is a quest I have been set on for years, and I will not give up.

To this day, I write about love, loss, mental health, humanity, relationships, family, nature, love, hope, and more.

What would your top three priorities be as Poet Laureate?

1. More exposure for local poets and authors.
2. Emphasis on mental health conversations in poetry.
3. Community engagement both in-person and via social media.

As Poet Laureate, how would you engage with the community?

I have had the fortune to develop seemingly countless connections in my lovely hometown of Napa. More notably, I have been a community organizer in my town since the age of 17 when I was just starting my senior year of high school. From organizing community outreach events with my nonprofit organization, The Hero Foundation, to my small business known as Hero Coffee Co. where I act as the public's coffee connection, to my public speaking gigs and live poetry recitations of my own original work to audiences of people throughout the valley and even my performances as a pianist and actor on stages throughout the county, I've learned a thing or two about how to bring people together through words and ideas. all for the sake of love.

Proof of residence in Napa County, CA (Copy of official mail with applicant name and address)

[Screen_Shot_2023-03-07_at_8.57.22_PM.png](#)

Letter of Intent

[Poet_Laureate_Letter_of_Intent.pdf](#)

Resume

[Resume_-_Michael_Rupprecht_1.pdf](#)

Letter of Support/Recommendation

[Letters_of_Rec..pdf](#)

5 Supporting Poems (Text, Video, or Audio format)

[Stalemate.pdf](#)

[Admittedly.pdf](#)

[Stop_Me_If_You_Heard_This_One_Before.pdf](#)

[Brethren.pdf](#)

[Autumn.pdf](#)

Michael Rupprecht

Napa, CA 94558

[@gmail.com](#)

Good day! I am writing this formal letter of intent to show my interest and intentions in applying to be considered as a candidate for the next Poet Laureate of Napa. Along with this attached LOI, I have submitted the requested and required supplements for this application. Please let me know if there appears to be anything that is missing or out of place.

Please allow me to offer some background as to who I am. Outside of my literary career, I am the Executive Director of The Hero Foundation in Napa as well as the Owner of Hero Coffee Co. in Napa as well. I am studying real estate while balancing my businesses and organizations that I manage and have been successful in the matter.

My interest in poetry and art at large formed in my early adolescence when I won my first writing contest in middle school. I found many of my peers and mentors telling me, much to my surprise, that I had a knack as a wordsmith and to keep it going. I heeded their words and continued to hone my craft, preferring the world of poetry as far as the literary world was concerned. Though I do not exclusively write poetry, it certainly is my favorite.

I have published three different collections of my poetry which are available for sale at local Napa bookstores as well as online through major book stores. My first book was Obsession, my second book was Paper Cuts, and my most recent book is titled Stronger. I have a fourth book on the way. I have had many an opportunity to perform spoken word recitations of my personal favorite poems of mine in front of large audiences throughout Napa County. To this day, my reputation as a writer and poet among my community has persisted, and for that I am deeply thankful. It is my hopes that I can continue my work and my mission to reach and help more people through my words with this platform, should I be chosen as the next Poet Laureate of Napa.

Thank you for your time and for considering me for this role.

Sincerely, Michael Rupprecht

6 March 2023

Carlo Bartalotti

Lead Marketing Director at The Hero Foundation Napa

I am writing to recommend Michael Rupprecht for the Napa County Poet Laureate position. I have been honored to work with Michael at The Hero Foundation Napa for over two years, and I have been constantly impressed with his enthusiasm, professionalism, and dedication in his work.

Michael Rupprecht is the Founder and Executive Director of The Hero Foundation and Hero Café. Michael works passionately every day to create meaningful connections with the community through his work at The Hero Foundation and Hero Café. In the past, Michael has administered poetry readings through The Hero Foundation to raise awareness for modern, community-focused social issues through poetry and raise awareness of the art form. His ability to create multi-faceted community service projects has helped him establish a deep connection with the Napa Valley. During our work together at The Hero Foundation, Michael has displayed great attention to detail, creativity, and selflessness in our outreach.

I have also been impressed with the growth of Michael's writing and research skills since I have known him. He has used these skills to write poetry books and impact our community through speeches and interviews. I have been able to see firsthand how the optimism and passion in his work has inspired community members to come together and address important issues in our beloved Napa Valley.

I am confident that Michael Rupprecht would excel in the role of Poet Laureate and inspire others to create deeper connections with the Napa Valley community.

Sincerely,
Carlo Bartalotti

Michael is by far one of the most verbally talented individuals I know. He has a gift for knowing exactly how to say something and when to say it. He uses this gift in writing his own poetry. The themes range from encouraging and motivation to spreading the message that it's ok to not be ok. Having such a unique view on the world is why I think Michael would be perfect as the Poet Laureate for Napa. He gets people and their struggles and he can write to the

masses to get the needed message across. A true son of Napa, Mr. Rupprecht would be the perfect person to have this title.

- Nicholas Lerseth

7 March 2023

Angelina Jurado-Apilado

Poet Laureate Recommendation

I have known Michael Rupprecht for over two years and have had the honor to not only see him release his works of poetry, but see his persistence in his love for making Napa the best it can be. Through the non-profit, The Hero Foundation, and The Hero Cafe it is evident that his passion and purpose is to connect with his community through every vessel available to him. It is through his poetry that he is raw, courageous, and a friend to all in the midst of this journey we all call life.

To see Mr. Rupprecht connect with people of all ages with his words is truly a sight to see. It is evident that people are fascinated by the authenticity and care that Michael brings to his community, and that is rare. For those reasons, I believe Michael would make the perfect person to represent Napa County as Poet Laureate.

- Angelina Jurado-Apilado

Michael Rupprecht

[REDACTED]
Napa, California

[REDACTED]@gmail.com

[REDACTED]@theherofoundationus.org
[REDACTED]

Summary:

I am a passionate, energetic, hard-working young man who always strives to get the job done and do so with kindness and diligence. The overarching goal in the work I do is to do my part in bringing peace, love, and prosperity to all in my community and beyond.

Education:

New Technology High School
2014 - 2016

Justin-Siena High School
2016 - 2018

Napa Valley College - Psychology, Environmental Science
Present

Employment History:

The Hero Foundation

Executive Director and Founder
October 2017 - Present

I am the Executive Director, President, and Co-Founder of The Hero Foundation, a local nonprofit here in Napa, California. The Hero Foundation is a team comprised of young adults from Napa County who agree that the world needs heroes. Saving the world in whatever way we can is our goal, and we strive to do our part every day. We do this through service projects, fundraisers, activism, demonstrations, marches, and by projecting peace and love to all we meet. Our projects vary depending on what our community, the world, and our own team feels are the

most vital and urgent issues that we should take on. We hope to inspire the youth of today to go out there and make an impact for the greater good instead of sitting idly by.

Hero Coffee Co.

Owner and Founder

August 2021 - Present

The Hero Cafe is a pop-up nonprofit cafe that I started alongside close friends that serves espresso drinks made from our partner's beans from Chik Monk Coffee Farms, a family-owned coffee farm in Chikmagalur, India. The coffee we serve is Organic, Ethical, Fair Trade, and Rainforest Alliance certified. Proceeds from our coffee sales go to The Hero Foundation as well as other nonprofits, charities, and other philanthropic organizations in the community.

City of Napa

City of Napa Commission Member on the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Committee

September 2020 - September 2022

As an appointed City of Napa Commission Member on the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Committee, the bulk of my work will involve working alongside my committee to advise the city council on how to best utilize funding to benefit low and middle-income households.

Frog's Leap

Guest Services Coordinator

September 2020 - June 2022

Being a Guest Services Coordinator involves managing guest service requests in person, online, and on the phones for Frog's Leap Winery. My time is spent organizing the customer database on AMS, making sure customer orders and deliveries go through to the shipping and membership department, corresponding with future clients via email and phone call, as well as checking guests in upon arrival and getting them situated for their reserved tasting while assisting the floor

staff along the way in whatever way I can to make the operation of the tasting room run as smoothly as possible.

Ca'Momi Osteria

Support Staff

January 2020 - March 2020

As part of the restaurant's support staff, my job involved keeping the restaurant clean and in order, delivering food to customers, welcoming guests into the restaurant and promptly getting them water before their meals, and assisting the lead servers throughout the evenings. My time was cut short due to much of the front house staff being laid-off amid the rise of Covid-19.

Alpha Omega Winery

Tasting Room Assistant

June 2018 - September 2018

As a tasting room assistant, my job consisted of cleaning glasses and other dishes. I cleaned the tasting room and took out the trash regularly. I was to restock all of our wines, bus tables, and set up private tastings in any of our private tasting rooms.

99.3 The Vine

Intern

June 2018 - October 2018

I intern at the local radio station answering calls, managing giveaways and social media affairs. I write some of our press releases and also write and voice various ads that go on the air.

The Gasser Foundation and Mentis

Temporary Employee

April 2019 - June 2019

As an employee of the Gasser Foundation, I was sent and paid to be an Intern at a select nonprofit.

Mentis

Intern

April 2019 - June 2019

My internship at Mentis consisted of managing the nonprofit's database for the quarter.

Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Company

Barista

October 2019 - January 2020

I concocted and served espresso drinks to the clientele as well as managed the cash register, handled janitorial duties, made sure we were properly stocked, and sold coffee beans.

Cafeteria Kids Theater

Counselor

April 2016 - June 2016

I worked closely with the teachers and directors of the acting class and acting summer camps. My job mostly consisted of working with kids who were interested in pursuing theater.

Three Twins Ice Cream

Server

March 2016 - June 2016

I worked the front of house through most of my time working at Three Twins. Serving ice cream, managing the cash register, stocking, and working with customers face to face was what my job consisted of.

Hobbies and Interests:

Writing - Poetry - Reading - Songwriting - Acting - Piano - Guitar - Singing - Volunteering - Learning - Nonprofit and General Organization Management - Team Management - Service Work

Professional Skills:

Leadership - Great communicator - Calm and confident - Collected - Persistent - Passionate - Articulate - Kind - Hospitable - Energetic - People person - Organizational skills - Executive level management - Engaging - Problem-solving skills - Management experience - Public speaking - Community outreach - Nonprofit organization management - Event planning - Social media - Teaching - Working with children - Fundraising - Teaching English as a second language - Proficient hospitality skills - Humanitarian - AMS knowledge - Proficient typing - Proficient computer skills

Languages:

English - Spanish (Partially)

Licenses and Certifications:

Mental Health First Aid USA Certification
- *From the National Council for Behavioral Health*
Issued Feb. 2019 - Expires Feb. 2022

Volunteering:Teens Connect

Teen Council Member
2018 - 2019

I was on the teen council of young community leaders working to find ways to engage the youth of napa in community service as well as finding ways to better their mental health and overall emotional well being through various projects led by Jeni Olsen.

Outreach360

Volunteer Teacher
2015 - 2018

As a volunteer teacher for Outreach360, I was traveling out to Jinotega, Nicaragua and Monte Cristi, Dominican Republic with my team to teach the children enrolled in Outreach360's programs. I was teaching English as a second language. I did one trip to Nicaragua and two to the Dominican Republic. I plan on returning as soon as I can.

Napa Valley Community Based Covid-19 Test Site

Volunteer

March 2020 - June 2020

I am part of the founding team that started the Napa Valley Community Based Covid-19 Test Site. I recruited volunteers, worked the entrance, handled the distribution of tests for patients, and facilitated the traffic as it is a drive-through test site. I may be returning, but I continue to handle volunteer recruiting as well as parts of the test site's publicity and recruitment ads.

MLK Coalition Steering Committee

Live Music Coordinator

September 2019 - January 2020

The MLK Coalition Steering Committee worked to put on an event called the Celebration of the Beloved Community in honor of the work and message of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This event went on for several days and included many activities and diverse volunteer opportunities for the Napa County community to get involved in. There was also a gathering with live music and public speakers included. I was in charge of organizing the live music portion of the event.

Honors and Awards:

Heart of Napa Award Nominee: Achievement in Nonprofit Excellence 2020

March 2021, Awarded by CVNL Napa

- Nominated for The Hero Foundation's excellence in continuing to serve its community in 2021.

Heart of Napa Award Nominee: Volunteer of the Year 2020

March 2021, Awarded by CVNL Napa

- Nominated for continued commitment to volunteer community service work in 2020.

Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition

Aug. 2019, Awarded by the US Congress, Congressman Mike Thompson

- *For The Hero Foundation's community service.*

Heart of Napa Award Nominee: Achievement in Nonprofit Excellence 2018

March 2018, Awarded by CVNL Napa

- *Nominated for The Hero Foundation's excellence in continuing to serve its community in 2021.*

Heart of Napa Award Nominee: Volunteer of the Year 2018

March 2018, Awarded by CVNL Napa

- *Nominated for continued commitment to volunteer community service work in 2018.*

Publications:

Stronger

Published Book by Michael Rupprecht

- Published in 2021

Stronger is Michael Rupprecht's third book and contains the inspiring, genuine, powerful poetry one can expect from the poet. The poems in Stronger are woven together to tell a whole world of stories about life, loss, pain, happiness, connection, humanity, resilience, and the trials that accompany life with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

Link: <https://www.napabookmine.com/book/9781716123641>

Paper Cuts

Published Book by Michael Rupprecht

- Published in 2018.

Paper Cuts is the second poetry book by California author and poet Michael Rupprecht. With poems ranging from topics such as love, war, addiction, mental illness, and world peace, Paper Cuts is undoubtedly Rupprecht's largest collection of poetry to date. Half of the money from your purchase will be going to the International OCD Foundation.

Link: <https://www.napabookmine.com/book/9781725062245>

Obsession

Published Book by Michael Rupprecht

- Published in 2017

Obsession is a book of poems about love, peace, and, of course, obsession. The poetry in this book paves a path that passes through early teenage romance, yearnings for peace, and lastly leading down into an abyss of obsession beyond one's wildest imagination. This book is meant to help, heal, and empower.

Link: <https://www.amazon.com/Obsession-Poetry-Michael-Rupprecht-T/dp/1981309683>

Hero Cafe Comes of Age at Napa's Oxbow Area

Published Article in the Napa Valley Register

Napa Valley Register

- Published in 2023

Article in Napa's local newspaper highlighting the growth of our coffee roasting company and nonprofit throughout the past year and how we now have an established location and permanent address for clientel to come to for their cup of locally roasted coffee, all ethically sourced.

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/business/hero-caf-comes-of-age-at-napas-oxbow-area/article_d6f352a4-92d5-11ed-bbe4-4765332eed17.html

Third Annual Philanthropy Issue

Published Article in Napa Valley Life Magazine

Napa Valley Life Magazine

- Published in 2022

"Now in its third year, Napa Valley Life's special Philanthropy issue allows us the opportunity to pause and recognize some of Napa Valley's leaders and local organizations committed to making life better for the less fortunate. Thanks to their dedication to caring for others, these community champions' philanthropic efforts have resulted in constructive changes with positive impacts, whether it be in support of healthcare, poverty, food assistance, education, housing, animals, or caring for our land.

Each year it's a challenge to make our final selection of philanthropists to recognize in this issue because taking care of each other is an intrinsic way of life within our local community. For this, Napa Valley is truly blessed."

Link: <https://www.napavalleylifemagazine.com/third-annual-philanthropy-issue>

Letter: Working Toward Net-Zero Carbon Emissions

Published Article by Michael Rupprecht

Napa Valley Register

- Published in 2022

My open letter to the City of Napa's supervisors describes the urgent need for action that my generation and I feel at our core. This is simply a call to action for them, should they choose to hear it and listen is up to them. Regardless, my team and I will work to protect the planet in whatever way we can by doing our part.

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/opinion/letters/letter-working-toward-net-zero-carbon-emissions/article_2186c8b2-e392-11ec-b6f1-67ebe96e53b3.html

St. Helena Farmers' Market: Enjoy Great Coffee and Be a Hero

Published Article by Stacey Bressler

St. Helena Star

- Published in 2022

"I love my morning espresso. And I love it even more when it comes from the Hero Café at the St. Helena Farmers' Market because I know it's not only improving my morning, but it's also helping others. The Hero Café is a nonprofit pop-up coffee shop whose proceeds support The Hero Foundation, a team of young adults from Napa County who are on a mission to save the world."

Napa's Hero FoundatION (and Cafe) Hoping to Change the World

Published Article by Kathleen Reynolds

Napa Valley Register

- Published in 2022

"Wouldn't it be wonderful to change the world? A group of Napa area friends, now in their early 20s, aim to do just that with The Hero Foundation. The Hero Foundation began as a community service club organized by Michael Rupprecht, Raphael Genty, and Dominic Di Pasqua after the 2017 wildfires. The members volunteered and raised funds for those affected. Since then, the main team added Carlo Bartalotti and the group now has a roster of over 150 volunteers in their pool."

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/business/napas-hero-foundation-and-cafe-hoping-to-change-the-world/article_9bba66ce-8f53-50d7-8732-1dbedccd1c42.html

Strengthen Your Mind, Strengthen Your Body

Published Article by Michael Rupprecht

This Is My Brave

- Published in 2021

I published this article as a game plan for individuals fighting OCD and other mental illnesses as we continue through the COVID-19 pandemic. In this piece, I emphasize my strategy to cultivate more strength for the individuals' mind, body, and spirit. The publisher is This is My Brave. Check out the amazing work they do in the mental health community by visiting their website at thisismybrave.org! You can even find a video of me performing an original poem at one of their showcases!

Link: <https://thisismybrave.org/news/strengthen-your-body-strengthen-your-mind/>

Thanks for Supporting ParentsCan

Published Article from the Napa Valley Register/Marlana Garcia

- Published in 2020

This article from the Napa Valley Register recaps the valued efforts of many nonprofit organizations, The Hero Foundation included, in serving Napa Valley during the peak of the pandemic in 2020.

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/opinion/letters/thanks-for-supporting-parentscan/article_93a1c7cf-35cc-56ee-a536-b16f9cef2bd6.html

Napa Marchers Remember Alaina Housley, Vow Continued Fight Against Gun Violence

Published Article from the Napa Valley Register

- Published in 2019

An article was published in the Napa Register on our organization's efforts to gather the community of Napa to take a collective stand against the causes of gun violence after a beloved local, Alaina Housley, had lost her life to gun violence.

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/news/local/napa-marchers-remember-alaina-housley-vow-continued-fight-against-gun/article_62e0b59f-1dd2-5955-a5a3-be59d7f96902.html

10 Questions: Napan Advocates Volunteerism, Peace and Love

Published Article from the Napa Valley Register/Jennifer Huffman

- Published in 2019

In this segment of the Napa Valley Register's "10 Questions", I was interviewed by Napa journalist, Jennifer Huffman, about my work in the nonprofit field through my organization known as The Hero Foundation as well as other volunteer endeavors I've been working on. We discussed how I got into my line of work and where I saw the future going. In this interview, I heavily emphasize my fight for peace and prosperity for all people in the community I serve and beyond, and how I want to keep up these efforts no matter what.

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/business/10-questions/questions-napan-advocates-volunteerism-peace-and-love/article_6775db2b-5fff-5ae9-8d32-3ef4ad7cc6d2.html

Napa Finkelstein Sisters Expand 'Be Kind' Movement

Published Article in the Napa Valley Register

- Published in 2019

My organization, The Hero Foundation, was once again invited to participate in the city's newfound Be Kind Day Event to emphasize the importance of kindness as a cultural staple in our immediate community. Napa Valley Register reports on the event in 2019.

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/news/local/napa-s-finkelstein-sisters-expand-be-kind-movement/article_8643a797-eaf5-54be-8c87-97f5a72bd96c.html

Interview With Michael Rupprecht from The Hero Foundation

Published Article from COOL Effect

- Published in 2019

COOL Effect, a Bay Area based environmental nonprofit organization, interviewed me about the work I do with my nonprofit, The Hero Foundation, as well as the importance of making cultural changes to stifle and combat climate change.

Link: <https://www.cooleffect.org/news/community-spotlight-interview-with-michael-rupprecht>

Community Builders: Be Kind Day is Aug. 17th

Published Article in the Napa Valley Register

- Published in 2019

The Hero Foundation was honored to have been selected to attend the Be Kind Day city-wide event as an exemplary nonprofit organization demonstrating the importance of kindness in the community and in the work we do. We were also awarded a Congressional Seal of Recognition from Congressman Mike Thompson for our efforts in Napa, CA during this event. Napa Valley Register reported on it all.

Link:

https://napavalleyregister.com/lifestyles/community-builders-be-kind-day-is-aug/article_21136ff2-a3ea-5e16-a48e-b22d41d0222b.html

4th Annual Heart of Napa Awards

Article Published by the Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership

- Published in 2019

The nonprofit organization that I started was nominated for a community service leadership award from CVNL.

Link: <https://cynl.org/2018heartofnapa/#>

Admittedly

I'll be the first
Of poets you know
To blatantly lay
One of my woes
That has less to do with the heart per say
In a traditional, dramatic, romantic way
For this one woe cuts a certain kind of deep
In the way that it could make me unable to sleep
The thought that I'm behind makes me weep
And that people my age are ahead while I keep
Pressing and pressing, thinking
Maybe I've not lost enough sleep
Maybe I've not lost enough sanity
But surely a man asking himself that
Might need hold onto what left he has
I'm speaking about comparing your journey
Of one young adult to another, both yearning
For achieved dreams and peaceful minds
Loving new families, houses with yards behind
It's been preached before but I'll do it again
Nobody has any real idea in the end
Of where they should be and at what point
Will they have made it?
What is "made it"?
Have I done enough
Do I have enough
I'll stop you right there
The road that you pave is yours and yours alone
And where you find the most love
Well, that is your home
Take time for yourself, be diligent in your craft
Do not lose hope, do not forget to laugh
Because we're all just as worried
About if we're enough
Truth is nobody is comparable
To anyone else
So tend to your mind, body, and spirit
And keep singing your song
For not that someone will hear it
But so that it rings loud and true
For the only one you must impress with your craft
Is none other than you

Autumn

After all the work
We can sit together and sip hot cider
Or coffee
Or hot cocoa on the colder days
With the fire roaring
And the chameleon specimens
Making home in the trees
Painting the skies with their
Profound artistry.

Brethren

As life takes us all
From one hemisphere to another
No matter the terrain
You're always my brother

On day shrouded in lows
And you can't find their end
Know that I would live and die for you
And that, right there, is a true friend

Even when Earth finally is as it is in Heaven
Way past the span of time
We'll always be brethren.

Stalemate

I know now better than ever
To leave what does not want me
Though there were times where it seemed
We had another move left
I've learned now to never wade
Where no matter how hard I work
And how long I play this game
My best option
Is to leave
And now I'm in a place
Far better
Than where I was.

Stop Me If You Heard This One Before

Stop me if you heard this one before.

This guy thinks he's gotta wash his wands way more than he needs to.
He touches door knobs and he's gotta wash his hands.
Stuff like that.

He's gotta routine in the morning too.
For how he gets ready.
It goes prayer
Brush teeth
In increments of seven seconds
Apply deodorant
In increments of four
Apply cologne
In increments of four
Always after
Never before
Or else you start over
Underwear
Pants
Belt
If you miss the belt you start over
Then shirt
And leave the room thinking a good thought
Or you need to start over
That's the kicker
Cause he can't stop the bad thoughts
Nevertheless
Make sure your body leaves the door frame with a good thought
If you don't want to start over.

Like I said. Stop me if you heard this one before.

As a kid he didn't really play with his toys
He organized them
Would line them up and admire his handy work
And ya know, bathrooms can be the worst for him
Dirt
Germs
Bodily fluids

Debilitating
It's everywhere
With zero evidence
He's using an arsenal of household cleaning products
If this thing had its way
He'd clean himself to death
Out of existence.

Stop me if you heard this one before

He stops letting himself near sharp things
Anything that could hurt someone
Cause when he looks in the mirror
The reflection shows a monster
Why would he do such things?
He is scared for the lives of his loved ones
He scared for his own life
He keeps seeing himself going through with it
Ending it all.
It's getting to be too much.

You can stop me if you've heard this one before.

It's the one where
He is seeing things
Not like "seeing things"
But there's these images
And these scenes
Of things that pain him, things that he knows he is not
What if it means nothing?
But what if it means something?
Where is it coming from?
What is happening to him?
He needs help.
Help him.
Help me.

Please stop me if you heard this one before.

Because
It all has to be perfect
Everything has to be perfect
Perfect
Perfect

Perfect
Perfect
Perfect.

Stop me if you heard this one before.

Love has become tricky
The thoughts latch onto it
His haven
Lost
These images and scenes are haunting
Unwanted
Horrible
Why did these come?
Why him?
He just wants to love.
He wants to be loved.
He needs love.

I want to live again.

Make it stop me if you've heard this one before.

The thoughts tell him he's not who he knows he is
And that's a blunt knife clean through the chest
He can't look at people
Loved ones
Himself
He's scared
He's haunted
He's hunted
And all while he smiles at gatherings
To friends and family.

Stop me if you've heard this one before.

At his lowest he wonders if God hears him
Or if he is mad at him
If he is lost in darkness
Losing light
Losing faith
Losing God
He fears his is losing Christ
Who he has known his whole life

He fears he is hopeless.

Stop me if you heard this one before.

The obsessions won't cease
The compulsions must happen
Or else
Why?
It never told me exactly
Or clearly for that matter
But I think it said I would go insane
I might not
But what if?
What if I become everything I am not
That would kill me.
To know thyself
And to be told you are not who you know you are
Is painful
Cruel
Agony
But listen
After years of this fight
I know
It will not kill me
I have been through it
I have been beaten, battered, bruised and left bloody
But I never gave up.
And I never will.

Every day I am at war

Until this mental tyranny is reigning no more.

Tell me, friend, have you heard this one before?

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

I live with OCD.

It's no joke.