Of the Monsters They Cannot See â?? Anxiety Tales

Description

The AutoEthnographer

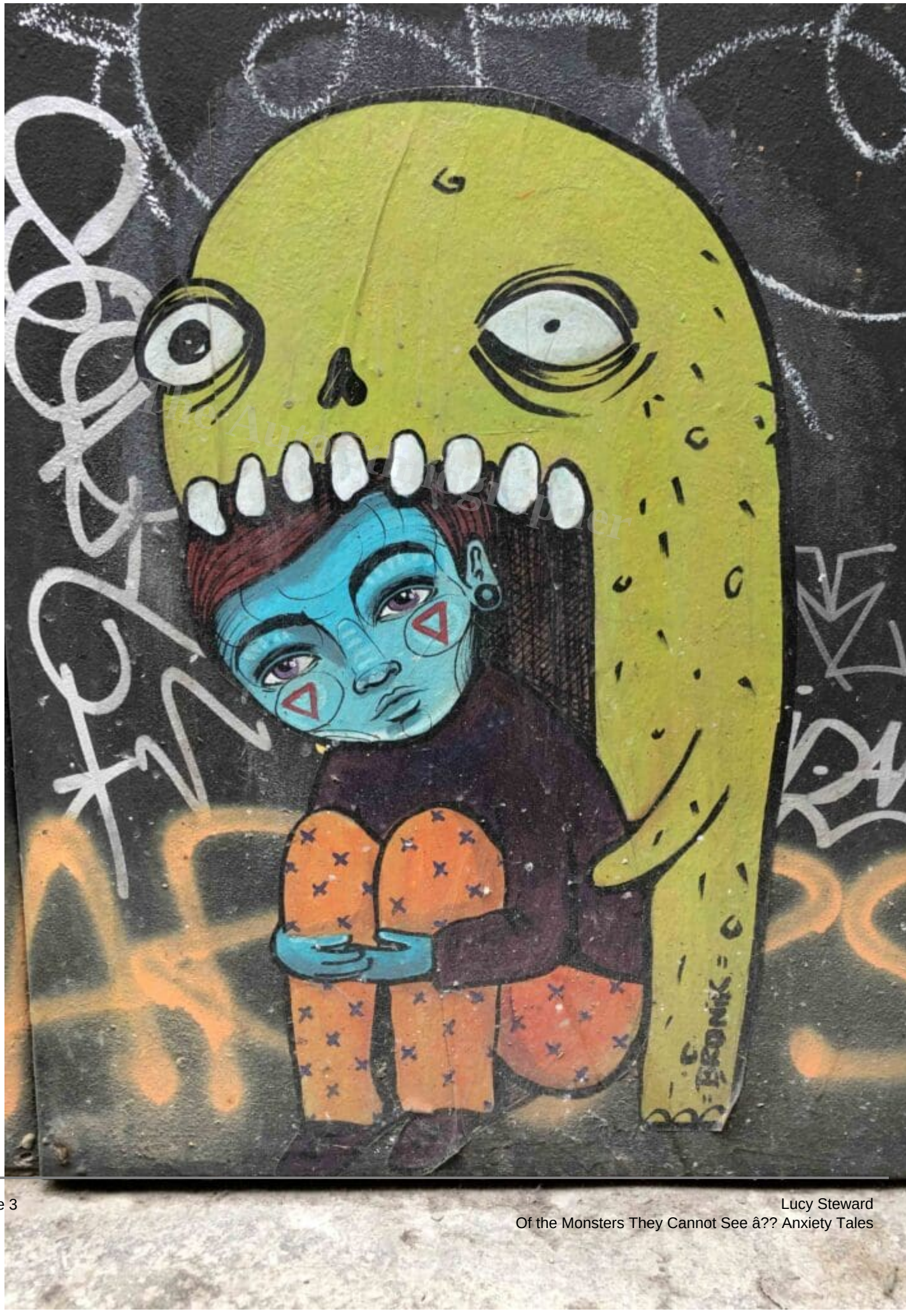
Of the Monsters They Cannot See â?? Anxiety Tales

Authorâ??s Memo

This sestina poem reflects and validates my own personal experience as a 14-year-old who was dealing with something I couldnâ??t initially even name; anxiety. Within the Covid-19 pandemic, it brewed into a fight much larger and longer-lasting than anyone, let alone a young teen, should have been battling. Anxiety became an outsized experience for many individuals during the pandemic, like myself, and it almost pushed many of us to the edge.

This poem is for anyone and everyone silently struggling through something no one else can really see. Our struggles are real. And by writing down my own experience, I affirmed to the world that we all have unseen monsters and they are not merely figments of oneâ??s imagination. In the process of unraveling my own anxiety and doing so in our present day society and culture, Iâ??m continuing to grow into someone whoâ??s figuring herself out and coming out the other side. By writing that journey of mine and sharing it, I hope to reach the many other people whoâ??ve had the same experience, either during the pandemic or just because life is messy. Ultimately, my poem documents my experience growing up in our American culture during a very confusing time, and how to follow the light through to the other side.

BONK


BRONK

A monster eating a girl by Marloes Hilckmann for Unsplash

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Look closer, slip past tangled memories and sink through the fabric of the mindâ??s illusions
And you might find the fabled potion master
Tucked away in a crease of your mind, frozen in time
While working she sings, her melodies so raw and strikingly ethereal in the silence
She bottles and brews rather peculiar potions, for you see, she dabbles in capturing emotions. Shed light
on the secrets that await you there, and if you find her, thenâ?¦well, weâ??re about to see it all unfold

Elsewhere, a girlâ??s story has started to unfold
Although quite content for many years, her illusion
of continual happiness would soon shatter into a million fragments, shining like glass in the light
It started small, spouts of icy fear bubbling here and there but quickly became morphed, remastered
And then a monster emerged, its soulless eyes piercing, its retched shrieking devouring the silence
A monster, the worst in all history of time

But no one saw the monster. And when she cried out they turned away in confusion, time after time
Although no bitter words were spoken, doubt rang loud and clear in their silence
Questions drowned her mind, so she waited for an answer to unfold,
But no answer came, and she began to wonder, was it all in her head, an illusion?
Teetering on the brink of destruction was a life too hard to master
And so she left at dawn, was gone by the first rays of morning light

As she fled, the monster followed. Deep into the forest they went, a place devoid of light.
She paused, heart racing, and the world began to spin as her vision blurred and time
warped, but still, she looked inside herself, into her core until a figure took shape; the potion master, who said, â??The monster was created by you and you can destroy it. Find courage and fate will unfold.â?•
Something snapped inside her, and she knew if she tried she could save herself and dispel all illusions
For a moment, there was silence

A symphony of emotion, so raw and so broken, gushed out of her and shattered that silence
And she knew that eventually sheâ??d destroy the beast and swim to the surface, follow the light
For she could scream and cry and fight,
fight those twisted illusions,
never letting time
get the best of her, for this was her life and she was the master.

Yes, traces of the monster still lingered, but it was getting easier to calm and master
So she began to float, no longer sinking alone in silence
Healing with loved one as the months passed, unfolded,
color returned to her days, seeping in like honey-golden light

She fell in love with life again, what a time
Even if no one else had seen it, she had. She knew it was real, no simple illusion.

Can you hear the love over those spiraling thoughts echoing too loudly in the silence?
Good, because love and laughter and light only grow over time, and your storyâ??s still unfolding.
You too can rewrite and remaster your life. Just know, all the monsters they cannot see are never an illusion.

Credits

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A monster eating a girl by Marloes Hilckmann for Unsplash

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