

Hope

Jamie Grace

In, out
Two words used to explain the two options for going through a door
In and out
The phrase my parents used throughout my childhood to explain how long we would be in the grocery store
And we were sometimes in there a little longer
Than in and out
The description used by my surgeon that was to represent the simple explanation of my nasal surgery
A quick outpatient procedure and I should stop having chronic sinus issues
In, out
The simplest rules that create a pattern to continue sending and receiving air through our lungs
And just like my surgery it's much more complex
But to use two simple words explains it the best
The breath goes in as we take it all in
And the breath goes out as we send it out
And just like my parents
When they would take us to run errands
Going through different aisles
To get all we need before going to the checkout lane
There is much more that happens in between
The in and the out
As our organs play a melody that the choir can't live without
But all we see is this simplistic remix, the in and out
The beginning and end
Breath, we take a breath
Most of us take for granted how easy it is for us to take
A breath
As a kid who battled asthma and an adult who still carries an inhaler
I oftentimes have to take conscious breaths
But even then my story can't even compare
To the beautiful souls on a waiting list waiting for a chance
To have the advantage
Of in, out
Step one, step two, we forget how good it feels
To have in, out
We get so caught up in our list of to-dos
We forget to take a moment to say
Thank you for in, out
I remind myself to take the steps, the simplest steps
Even on the days where it feels like I can't
On the days where work isn't fun anymore
To love what you do and never work a day?
But what about the days where I'm working and I love it
But it's still a pain
And on my days where my family is far from perfect
The days where apologies and insecurities are colliding and colluding
And I feel so insecure I start to wonder if it was all worth it
And on the days where the news makes me angry
Where change seems unrealistic and middle ground seems like an impossible dream
On the days where my car seems like it won't start
When I try to make breakfast but everything ends up burnt
When I'm an hour from home and my phone is on one percent
When I start to doubt my choice to live on the West Coast and pay this much in rent

On the days when I'm tired of shopping but I still haven't found what I'm looking for
You too have had these moments when you're just hoping for an open door
When my health is failing me, friends aren't around
When my confidence is too quiet, when my fears are too loud
When everything is just as it seems
Broken pictures and scattered dreams
And everything I want is confused with what I need
But it doesn't even matter because none of it is coming to me
When I feel alone
When I am alone
Somehow, there is still hope
Because just like the motions it takes to go through a door
My body is ready to do the only consistent thing that life brings forth
In, out
It tells me that there is still a chance to recover
In, out
It tells me that right now won't last forever
In, out
With each passing breath, there is more promise of the next
In, out
In, out
Sometimes soft, sometimes consistent
Sometimes heavy, sometimes burdened
Sometimes the in is because of surprise
Sometimes the out is the reality of demise
Sometimes the in filled with disbelief
Sometimes the out is the only form of relief
In, out
I will not take it for granted
I will not lose sight of the only thing I know
Because in a world of uncertainties and things I'm unsure of
I will always remember that where there is breath
There is hope