

# Mend

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## Lady Lazarus

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martinez: Lady Lazarus

# Lady Lazarus

Jennifer Martinez



I have done it 3 times.  
When I was 8, 28, and 36.  
I never manage it—  
Sick but resilient.

Never been a smiling woman.  
I am only 40.  
Getting so close.  
Coming out of the grave with scars.  
I'm not a cat. I don't have 9 lives.

Nevertheless, I may not look the same,  
But I am identical to the girl I used to be.  
The first time it happened I was 8,  
Unable to make sense of my own little chaos.  
It wasn't an accident: a plan foiled  
By my grandmother's knock on the  
bathroom door.

Wavering between  
running away and ending it all,  
The second time should have worked—  
But he always got his way.  
He refused to let the pills cure my pain,  
Pain from his love language,  
Followed by a rush to the hospital.  
Being dead I rose up again,  
Even found happiness for a short time.  
A few years of success...

The third time  
All the promises of futures and forevers  
Walked out the door.  
Lost sight of who I was—  
My hand wouldn't stop shaking.  
I couldn't quite get the right grip,  
So I let go and let God.

If dying  
Is an art, like everything else,  
I don't follow through to the end.  
It is not what I do exceptionally well.

At the start of every attempt  
Life felt like hell.  
Nothing felt real,  
Or it felt too real.

Maybe if I knew my calling,  
There would not have been so many attempts.  
There must be one because still I stand.

I am a composition of pain  
With a story to tell.  
Don't underestimate my return.

There is no charge to see my scars.  
If you ask to see them,  
I will show them to you.

Scars prove  
I was in the battle—  
Maybe for far too long.  
But I have not lost the war.  
Living each day,  
I write the pains away.

Out of the fog  
I ascend—  
Never again to be beaten.  
I'm now a man eater.

*After Sylvia Plath*