

Let's talk about it (TRIGGER WARNING: sexual violence, mental health issues)

1. Some topics are avoided,  
are altogether ignored.

Incorrect assumptions are  
advertised, never explored.

2. Anxiety is for girls,  
great! Autism just for boys.  
But PTSD in men  
must be from war, 'cause only war destroys.

3. Some of our assumptions  
are actually so strong,  
some feel like they are alone  
and doing their struggles wrong.

4. For a long time I suffered.  
Silently being ashamed.  
Afraid that I was alone  
and the one who should be blamed.

5. 'Cause according to folklore  
females and males have distinct  
diagnoses to deal with  
which could not ever be linked

6. I was never a soldier,  
so some are surprised to hear  
how I know PTSD  
plays exhausting games with fear.

7. Truth is that I have flashbacks  
from when I was assaulted  
and I ask you to assume  
all I did to be faulted.

8. It's easier to assume  
an array of made up facts,  
forever avoiding talks  
to do with violent acts.

9. I promise I was not drunk,  
did not do drugs or such things.  
Thought short hair would keep me safe.  
See what shameful silence brings?

10. I have never worn a skirt,  
so it being too short was –  
whatever they say or do –  
definitely not the cause.

11. I was neither drunk nor drugged,  
did for sure not ask for it,  
I am also not female.  
Fun fact: they still did not quit.

12. I still have constant nightmares,  
never able to forget,  
for a while I thought I was  
wrong and weak to be upset.

13. Back when this happened to me,  
my brain could not comprehend,  
could not understand that the  
things they tell you in the end  
don't matter.  
Now I know better.  
We need to break  
the pattern  
and take  
the chance to make a difference.  
Awareness must not equal avoidance!  
See, my experience is in no way unique,  
I'm not a freak, we need to speak,  
up!  
We need to stop  
to avoid and drop  
every conversation that is hard.  
I get it!  
No one likes to talk about disability,  
or the reality of rape,  
or inequality.  
But labels are no guarantee  
for anyone's experience.  
Autism is not a dirty word,  
dyslexia not absurd,  
person-first not necessarily preferred.  
I'm a rape survivor.  
I've been hurt  
enough,  
without being told traumatic stuff

like that is rough,  
but only happens to specific people  
in specific situations.  
It's tough,  
but assumptions labelled awareness  
should, in all fairness,  
not be stapled to the labels people carry.  
'Cause that way a label  
does nothing but enable  
avoidance.  
And this avoidance only creates  
a fairytale that dictates  
how we evaluate experience.  
It only isolates  
those,  
whose fates  
actually make us uncomfortable.  
There are few things more isolating  
than being ashamed for something  
you didn't have a say in.  
Voicing things is a big deal.  
It can feel  
like the words alone make it real.  
I will admit  
it's scary at first,  
but let's commit  
to quit this silence  
bit by bit  
and conquer this fear.  
**Let's talk about it!**