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I Can Do Anything

The first time I got my heart broken, it felt splintered and irreparably impaired. I felt like it had dug itself to my toes and drained my body of all merriment. It was completely unable to regulate my body. I discerned my feelings like tiny gears shifting infinitesimally and I thought that it could not get any worse. Naturally, I got my heart broken again, and again and again and it hurt more and more each time.

I tried to kill myself when I was 15-- last year feels galaxies away-- and I resented myself for calling 9-1-1 as soon as I did. I thought they would come slowly, like in films. That night when police cars rushed my block with haste, and the knocks of grown men on my front door left a hollow in my throat, I thought that was it. Now that I know I will never be immune to heartbreak, I can cautiously say the last time I got my heart broken was the most remarkable experience God has given me.

I have a rich history of meekness and excessive, disadvantageous kindness. These eccentricities, while wretched, seem congenital to me. I will allow abominable girls to talk about me until I am stressfully pulling my hair out, until I self-ruin, until I am asking to leave class to cry in a stall and pray that everything will end. The University of Michigan conducted a study in which research showed participants possessing emotional distress activated the same neural region responses as physical pain. This is so extremely fascinating to me, and it is what first prompted my urge to study neuroscience and suicide prevention efforts. I want to know how a person can manifest

so much hatred and why I spent most of my life feeling the way I do. I want to help myself, and I want to help other people too.

I wallowed in despondence after I was publicly humiliated at school. My mom can be dismissive and insensitive when it comes to my feelings, but I was so obviously distraught she felt compelled to ask what was wrong. I told her my heart was broken which was more information than I had ever previously shared. She then told me about the day my father killed himself. She never speaks about him, and not out of fragility but out of fortitude. She detailed that day so explicitly and provocatively that I felt like he was my husband. My dad shot himself in the head the day of my mom's first ultrasound. My mom remembered the police coming to her door and not being able to breathe. Her mind was under torment. She told me she was just another pregnant, poor, black, single statistic.

My mom is a genius; she is the most intelligible human being I have ever met. She glimmers amid her white, male counterparts, most of them being intellectual multi-millionaires. My mom, a former NASA engineer, holds two Masters degrees, one in mathematics with a concentration in computer science and the other in computational finance. My mom, a powerful, monetarily sufficient, single, black woman challenges our male dominated society everyday. When She embraced me, I felt her pain so viscerally my lungs were clawing for air. I told myself: if my mom can do that, I can do anything. My mom always reminds me that every heartache is not fatal, and when your heart breaks it opens up and creates even more space to be filled with love.

Maybe I'm idiosyncratic and important, and maybe I blend in and I'm invisible. I told my mom if life is a race, I do not even want to run if I cannot win. And my mom told me: you cannot win if you do not run.