

## **The Anxiety (“A”)**

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What I need you to know about The Anxiety is that it will look like always walking on the right side of a person,

because the left side feels odd, and you don’t like odd numbers, because, once,

you made an 89 on an essay and your professor wouldn’t round it to an A, but you saw where she erased it.

She said she “wrestled with what you deserved,” and you and The Anxiety lost sleep over averages. To be more than average.

You told yourself ghost stories. You convinced yourself the hallways were haunted so you wouldn’t leave your room,

-a single occupancy. Then, The Anxiety said, “I’ll sleep in the same bed, maneuver myself until your vertebrae breaks. Until there is a spring lose.”

It’s like, “Now, I’m not a big deal, but write about me.” “...Or don’t acknowledge me?” “Why doesn’t anyone acknowledge me?”

The Anxiety and I live inside papier mâché houses - both architect and builder - we take turns turning off the light.

On the first night in our new home, the paper thin walls caught fire. And we convinced ourselves to not use the oven for the better half of the year,

and when we say “better,” we mean, life was easier when you chose your chance encounters.

The Anxiety and I are not risk takers. We're  
"read the last page first, spoil the ending  
before it spoils you," type of people.

We sign and seal  
everything with an "A,"  
but sometimes,  
if you look hard enough,  
you just might discover  
who's holding the pen.