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## Just Breathe

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## Just Breathe

### Cover Page Footnote

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# JEN ENRIGHT

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## JUST BREATHE

"You have to suffer if you're ugly,"  
Mother taunts day in and day out.  
"Why not just lick the light switch  
and do us all a favor?"  
A classmate, a stranger even.  
"You have to suffer, suffer, suffer."  
They try to get her to  
Teeter on the edge of that cliff,  
One exhale from going over.  
But, she's strong.

A voice whirs in her head:  
It's her own, in her happy place  
Where she is good, and pretty  
And worthwhile.  
The sun shines warm on her face here  
And if she has to,  
She can fly  
Off that cliff  
Into the setting sun.  
She can shine as diamonds  
On the water shine.  
Beautiful reflections of the sun  
And all that is good.  
"Diamonds come from coal"  
She tells herself.  
She is hopeful, always  
Hope filled within her heart  
That she has a fighting chance.

Until the day that she realized  
How soft diamonds really are.  
They can be smashed down, stomped on,  
Broken into pieces like jagged glass  
Or the tiny seeds in blackberry jam.  
What hope does she have now that she's broken?  
Go ahead, suffer, suffer - she can fly -  
Exhale.