

# I Have Severe Depression, But That Is Okay Because I Am a Man

Jordan Isbell

I love to hide all the kitchen knives  
in the cabinet and wash their sins away  
as I tell the little kids on Avenue St.  
that the scars on my right arm came  
from a fight with wolves with 3-inch teeth  
instead of a utensil that a mother uses to chop  
tomatoes.

I love to hear my mom remind me that  
showing tears means you show weakness,  
and that you cannot cry over all of your problems,  
all while my wife asks for the third time today  
why I act like a robot  
when I fail to show the slightest sign of emotion  
and why I stared at our son's contorted leg  
and told him to get up and walk it off.

I love to watch my dad grab a box of tissue  
and dart past my brother to console my sister  
sitting beside him  
because the blood that leaked from his nose  
on to the floor did not and could not matter  
more than the single tear that crept from her eye.

I love to wear my mask publicly and even when  
I'm indoors because no longer do I have to  
worry about my frown accusing me of being an  
android who needs to express their feelings more,  
and my smile labeling me as an untrustworthy  
con artist with a sinister plot underneath.

I love to hear my grandma tell me I'm  
such a handsome man, a thought I believe in  
before I come out of the bathroom remembering  
that my arms are too small,  
my beard isn't long enough,  
my abs are a 4-pack and not an 8-pack,  
my jaw isn't chiseled enough,  
my legs aren't strong enough,  
I'm not strong enough.

I love to share this pain with others and  
listen to the distant voices tell me they are  
here for me, all while the voices in my head grow  
louder in laughter, as they know they are the only ones  
who will ever remind me of how much I'm worth,  
and will continue to convince me to open the  
cabinet again.



**Sunday Blues**  
**Taylor Paige Wypyski**  
Mixed Media, Drawing