

Masks: An Epilogue

Don't be fooled by the face I wear, for I wear a thousand masks,
And none of them are me.
Don't be fooled, for God's sake, don't be fooled.

I give you the impression that I'm secure, that confidence is my name and coolness is my game,
And that I need no one. But don't believe me.

Beneath dwells the real me in confusion, in aloneness, in fear.
That's why I create a mask to hide behind, to shield me from the glance that knows,
But such a glance is precisely my salvation.

That is, if it's followed by acceptance, if it's followed by love.
It's the only thing that can liberate me from my own self-built prison walls.
I'm afraid that deep down I'm nothing and that I'm just no good,
And that you will see this and reject me.

And so begins the parade of masks. I idly chatter to you.
I tell you everything that's really nothing and nothing of what's everything, of what's crying
within me.

Please listen carefully and try to hear what I'm Not saying.
I'd really like to be genuine and spontaneous, and ME.
But you've got to help me. You've got to hold out your hand.

Each time you're kind and gently, and encouraging,
Each time you try to understand because you really care,
My heart begins to grow wings, very feeble wings, but wings.

With your sensitivity and sympathy, and your power of understanding,
You alone can release me from my shallow world of uncertainty.
It will not be easy for you. The nearer you approach me, the blinder I may strike back.

But I'm told that Love is stronger than strong walls, And in this lies my hope, my only hope.

Please try to beat down these walls with firm hands, but gentle hands, for a child is very
sensitive.

Who am I, you may wonder,
I am every man you meet, and also every woman that you meet, And I am YOU, also.

Author Unknown