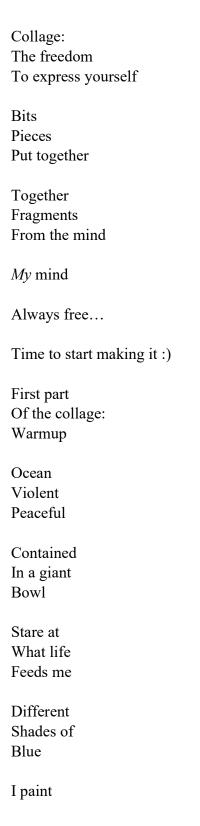
\*WARNING\*: This poem contains potentially disturbing acknowledgements of themes about war and death. Please do whatever is needed to feel comfortable reading this poem (including not reading it). Thank you.

## Collage of the Free (a "Matured Version" of Fragments of the Mind)



On my canvas As a background

Second part
Of the collage:

Peace

Ash

Tears

Blood

Spilled

Numerously

On the ground

Underground

A place

To shelter for the night

**Bodies** 

Peacefully quiet and asleep

Awake in a nightmare

**Bodies** 

Dead

Or is dead=asleep?

No need

For an expanded

Vocabulary

Or is there?

Peace=quiet

Peace=sleep

Death=sleep

Death=peace

But it happens more

In wars

Fragments

Of my mind

## Thinking

About words
That make people
See red warning signs

Lost, drifting in The deeper part Of the ocean

Driftwood pieces Stained with blood Glued

Glued on to my canvas
As a war back in reality rages on
Wait, was I not in reality from the start? What start?

Third (and final) part of the collage: knowing

I know very few things. They tell me I should know more. I agree, as much as readers want me to disagree. It keeps things controversial, which is modern. People like modern.

I take a fragment of my mind that looks like an antique boat house, glue it to my canvas. Abstract concepts battling their roommates' opposing opinions, but the ocean's sound drowns out their shrill shrieks. As they come to their senses, the ocean quiets; the waves rock the boat less. Everyone surrenders. Wars get old.

No matter how much I know about the world, whether it is the colors of life, the symbols of it, I could never write a textbook about it. Only make a collage. I know only what *my* world allows me to. In my kiddie boat I sailed across the shallows as a warmup. My mature self must conquer deeper depths and unwavering waves. I must find peace among the violent, war-like tides.

I know I must. Or do I?

I lose fragments of my mind on these voyages. They come at a price. The fragments drown where everything drowns. I don't even know which part of the ocean that is. The confusion of life. I drink it like a poisonous potion, and it weakens the strength I need to sail across the ocean.

My mind is never free