

DID we write

Are my thoughts my own?

Lolly 

Berwoo 

Peach 

Kitty 

Ray of Sunshine 

Poetry about accepting and embracing dissociative identity disorder

Louise

BTM

Chiara

Penelope

Maya

Caris

Berlou

Carabel

Amber

Mia 

Mia Berlou

Alex

Jessica

Isabel

Maiya

Stef

Tiger

DID we write
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Back cover text:

'A courageous and powerful collection, which shines light on perhaps the most misunderstood of conditions.'

- Andrew Lawes author of *Dancing With Disorder*

DID we write are Amber Louise Ainsworth, a dissociative identity disorder system from the UK. Since realising they are a DID system early 2021 aged 38 they've been working through their healing: processing and sharing all their collective trauma.

Mia has led the writing projects and has written *DID we write: the healing*, which details the journey they went through during the first 18 months of healing in all their own words and is narrated by Jessica, their writer.

Mia has also written or collaborated on most of the 800+ poems written between November 2021 and May 2022, after finding the Instagram poetry community and using prompts to write countless poems every week.

Are my thoughts my own? Is the first of several poetry books to be published by DID we write. The following titles might be coming soon:

Parts and farts
Healing the big T
Woe is Mia
Creating our life together
Gone to shit
Is anyone listening?

‘As a DID system myself, I relate so much to DID we write’s poetry. Not only do they capture the struggles and emotions I face on my journey with DID, but they also incorporate the messages of hope and encouragement needed to press on towards healing. The messages they share with each other in their poetry are the same messages I’ve learned to repeat to my selves as we heal from our trauma. I recommend their poetry to anyone with DID because it reminds us that we are not alone, and our struggles are shared by others who also continue to press on towards healing.’ *Claire Lefferts*

‘I am honoured to have been given the opportunity to read this collection of work before it goes to print. This is a beautiful collection of poetry both heartwarming and heartbreaking in equal measure. The descriptive and relatable words and themes pulled a deep ping of recognition from my soul. What beauty there is to be found in such painful journeys of self-discovery. This collection is a healing balm, a reminder that sharing our stories can heal and empower those who haven’t found their way through the darkness just yet. Light dispels darkness and may this beautiful system continue to let their lights shine brightly, to illuminate the truth and reality of DID with such artistry, clarity and pure honesty.’ *Joanne Murphy, owner of Return To Om - Womb Connection, Reiki, Yoga & Massage.*

‘A book of heroic and rebellious verse that offers insight into DID, voiced from the perspective of many of Amber’s alters.’ *Alison @meh_poets*

‘This collection of poetry perfectly paints the abstract picture of what it's like to live with a dissociative condition. A real achievement in giving a voice to those society often does not hear.’ *Katja, Sorry My Mental Illness Isn't Sexy Enough For You @livesnotlabels*

‘Searingly honest and hopeful’ *Michelle Smith*
@snow.white_writes

‘Comforting in how relatable it is. It reminds me and my system that there will be those who understand, even if there are those who judge our "failure" to lead a "normal" life. This journey is not about them. It is for each and every one of us survivors, and it's not for the faint hearted.’ *Jus*

‘As a recently discovered DID system myself, “Are my thoughts my own” was a painfully and profoundly beautiful read. These poems have put words to experiences we thought we would never be able to explain or share with anyone outside our own mindbody. Reading this collection of poems inspired us to paint for the first time in our life; a brand new means of expressing our emotions and experience. We are forever grateful for everyone who took part in penning these words. We believe this book has the power to inspire and comfort not just other humans living as multiples, but also anyone recovering from trauma and on a journey to discover and truly believe that they were always enough.’ *M*

‘A wonderful book of poetry, giving a fascinating insight into Dissociative Identity Disorder. Not only is the reader taken on a journey through the minds of the many identities of the author, it is also a collection of beautiful poetry full of emotion. I very much recommend this book.’
Pat Burton @pat.burton.poetry

‘A thought-provoking poignant book of poetry which truly gives an internal perspective of this distressing complicated disorder.’ *sabrinaspems*

This is my first poetry book and I am so proud of us all and grateful that we found a way to process our trauma and work through this absolute hell.

I want to thank my Granma (our mum) Doreen for always being there for us and putting up with all the crazy and accepting us for who we are.

Fanks Granma, luff you - Mia

Foreword

In October 2021, I set up a mental health project called Sorry My Mental Illness Isn't Sexy Enough For You. The idea of this project was to give a voice to those marginalised in society by dint of having the most misunderstood and stigmatised mental health disorders.

I admit that at the time, I was naive. I had no real understanding of anything much beyond my own diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. I was especially in the dark about conditions such as Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). It was only through interacting with systems - or alters - on social media that I began to understand how complex this condition is and what it meant.

I began to correspond primarily with Mia in early 2022 after she responded to a request for first person stories on DID posted on our Instagram. At the time I still had very little understanding of the subject.

After Mia submitted her story, I began to take an active interest in DID and set about doing my own research. I am still far from an expert but speaking to hosts, systems and alters has been incredibly interesting and informative.

When we talk about mental health, discourse tends to focus upon anxiety and depression. Conditions such as DID are frequently overlooked. It's little wonder, then, that public perception of DID is often misinformed.

We still tend to falsely associate any condition involving multiple identities with criminality or psychopathy. You can't really blame people for holding such erroneous views - how can you, when the sheer lack of information and first person perspectives in the public domain allow misconceptions to take hold?

That's why the work of the likes of Mia and the other alters is so important. If we are truly to understand what makes us human, we need to talk about what it actually means to be human. That's where this anthology of poetry comes in.

In each of the poems, the visceral intensity of emotion is palpable. Yet despite this, there is hope and optimism. This is not a collection of bleak poetry designed to solely convey trauma and pain. Make no mistake, these have their place in the book. But this collection is so much more.

The alters tackle a broad range of subjects through the lens of DID. This gives us a rare and unique insight into what it's like to live with DID.

Because whatever you think you know about DID - you don't.

Katja Pavlovna

Sorry My Mental Illness Isn't Sexy Enough For You

@livesnotlabels

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*“I’ve written hundreds of thousands of words this year,
and I didn’t write any of them. This is either DID or an
impressive enduring psychosis.”*

- Amber

Why 'Are my thoughts my own?'

We've been healing since our system reveal started in October 2020, and we have Covid to thank for finding ourselves. The space it gave everyone, we sank deep inside, and found the reasons why Amber (our host and alter who has lived most of the life) has always suffered with anxiety and depression, and always knew something was wrong.

She'd remembered early traumas in 2019 while training in myofascial release, which can release physically stored trauma. All of these traumas were related to individual alters and all of them had to be shared and processed over and over again, our brain was too effective at boxing up pain and saving it for another day.

This will be the first book of many. Mia has been writing poetry daily for about six months or so, before that it was mostly status updates documenting our very strange journey, life has felt like we're living in a sci-fi book since this began and it often feels impossible to navigate. So, we've written, a lot. It's one of the ways we process, we can access parts of ourselves and communicate easier externally. And we have Mia who is permanently sat out here feeling our feelings and putting them into words.

This is a collection of her/our poetry specifically related to the experience of understanding and embracing our dissociative identity disorder.

- Louise and Jessica

Alter contributors

We are quite complex, and throughout the healing process have had many fusions (when two or more alters become one, sharing memories and feelings, thinking as one). Each one has been for a reason, that we've usually worked out in retrospect.

It could be to do with trauma processing, supporting an alter who is suffering, sharing information, or passing parts around. Mia has been fused with many trauma holders (TH - an alter that holds memories of or emotions related to a specific trauma) and enabled them to feel and heal in the body without doing it alone. With each fusion though, we've wanted to adopt a new name to reflect who is present, we also often have different versions of the same alters, usually they're different ages, which is why we have so many names and alters, some of the alters below are the same people in different configurations.

This is a list of the alters who wrote poetry within this book, the number in brackets indicates how many poems they wrote/collaborated on:

Alex - TH (grief) (1)

Amber - host, alter that lived most of the life (5)

Berlou - first trauma holder (14)

Berwoo - non-traumatised version of Berlou, hero (1)

BTM - Berlou, Tiger and Maya fusion (3)

Carabel - Anabel (Isabel TH) and Little Cara TH fusion (1)

Caris - Isabel and Cara fusion (2)

Chiara - Maya, Cherry, Cara and Selina (TH) fusion (5)

Isabel - protector and bitch (5)

Jessica - writer, a Penelope (7)
Kitty - Amber TH (1)
Lolly - TH (loneliness) (1)
Louise - Pen, Berlou and Selina fusion (2)
Maiya - Pen, Mia and Maya fusion (6)
Maya - half of Mia (7)
Mia - magic fairy unicorn, a Penelope (60)
Mia Berlou - Mia and Berlou fusion (6)
Peach - little TH (3)
Penelope - first and chronic splitter (12)
Ray of Sunshine - Maya TH (4)
Stef - sexual alter and protector (2)
Tiger - young Stef (1)

No One Noticed by Berlou and Isabel

No one noticed,
The moods weren't just moods,
Not even the remotest idea,
That it wasn't just attitude.
Not even herself.
She didn't see,
So how would anyone else?
No chance of being set free.
Deep inside,
I cried,
Concealed,
Until we were revealed.
The veil was lifted.
We were gifted,
A second chance.
Taken, out of trance.
The floodgate,
Was opened late.
We have to compensate,
For a lack of meaning.
We've been healing,
Through feeling.
Noticing each ache,
While thinking we are fake.
Engulfed in heartbreak.
Acknowledging our pain,
Every decades old bloodstain,
Releasing all chains.
We aren't there thus far,
Immersed in a psychological bazaar.
Processing trauma after trauma,

In this enduring melodrama.
For how much longer?
This had better make us stronger.
Otherwise, what was the motivation,
For this mental aberration,
To be deconstructed,
Massively disrupted.
There had better be a happy ending,
To this ridiculous mind-bending.

Real by Amber

If I couldn't see it happening and there was no other explanation, I wouldn't believe this was real.

Barely by Maya

Barely visible, she walks away from them.

Barely recognisable, she leaves her past.

Barely conscious, she keeps going.

Barely believing, she trusts the process.

Barely human, she embraces who she is now.

As she leaves who she was before and enters the next phase of her life, without a backward glance.

The Past by Mia

Unraveling the past
It was never going to last
The burying of pain
Eradication of blame
Living an illusion
Never finding a conclusion
I unpick my pieces
See what's left underneath
When secrets have been revealed
And all is healed
We still have to fight
We dragged ourselves into the light
Exposed an anomaly
We showed you I can be many
Now we say
This is why
He stole my life
And now I try
To get it back on track
And take it back

Alarm Bells by Mia and Berlou

The alarm bells had been ringing for years,
Fate dictating the time the spell would lift.
Containing their enthusiasm for finding each was
difficult,
They try, but they go on a lot about it in their poems.

Myself by Mia, Isabel, Berlou, Berwoo, Maya, Pen, Stef, Tiger, Peach and Ray of Sunshine

I write
To find out how I feel
For I share my mind with others
Separate
But the same
Faces within a face
I write
To find myself
Myself
We can shine through our fingers
And we heal with our words
I write
To be seen
And see

Hidden Self by Maya and Jessica

Diving into her hidden self,
She found chaos and prisoners.
Consciousness trapped in cells,
Echoes of profound whispers,
Repeated like magic spells,
Unpicking amnesias
Concealing secret selves.
Eruptions of mental bohemians,
Woken from psychological wells,
Exposed, aberrations break the curse.

Awakening by Amber and Jessica

Letting go.
But it's so hard.
Who I was, gone.
Remaining, unrecognisable.
I'd hoped,
For drastic change.
An awakening.
Answers.
This.
I did not expect.
They talk,
About finding yourself.
What do you do after though?

Categorised Pains by Mia Berlou

Unwittingly she categorised pains,
Boxed them up and put them away,
Traumas labelled and assigned to girls,
Inside they slept at the bottom of a well.
Hundreds in dormancy, each hoping for clemency,
Waiting their turn to heal their burns.
Discarded, their pains grew bitter,
She missioned to wake the splitters.
Process, heal and make them human,
An unlikely endeavour with a lot of confusion.
Healed they appeared and there were more fusions.
Putting herself back together, fixing the illusion.

Not Feeling by Louise

Those things you're avoiding?
That feeling you're not feeling,
the thoughts that keep happening,
it all needs healing.

You stamp them down,
disown and disconnect.
Triggered, you drown,
swimming in your own neglect.

Be cautious and go slow,
carefully, you need to feel it,
be patient with your sorrow.
Then, you can heal it, and glow.

Alone by Maiya

What makes you think you can do it, all alone?
Even without me, you might still grow.
Together we could be so much stronger.
You maybe see me as a marauder?
A passenger, a parasite, you might even be right.
I can't just go and give up the fight.
Don't you need somebody to journey with you?
Maybe, together, life needn't be so blue.

Denial by Mia

Denial would be the easier choice.
Once you start to give them a voice,
You realise, they aren't just brain noise.
Next thing, life's destroyed!
You'll wish you were just paranoid.

Job by Mia

Healing is a full time job
There are pros and cons

We Write by Everyone

I guess
We write
We know not what
But it's clearly
How we process

So much
Has happened
These last
Fifteen months
And
Thirty nine years

Somehow
We fragmented
So much
Kept so many
Secrets
From each other

And
One of the weirdest
Things is that
Once we've
Shared our secrets

Physically
Mentally
Emotionally

From car crashes

Rejections
Illnesses
Injuries
To
DA
SA

Every thing
That hurt
We all must feel
But then
We all
Mostly
Forget

We let
It go

So
We are a mess
And we are sorry
We are doing our healing
Here
With our words

We have to put them somewhere though
And they might
Help someone
Understand
Themselves

Or not
But

We don't know what else to do now
Our words are
At the moment
All we have

As we try to
Put ourselves
Back together

Thank you
For your
Patience

Who by Mia

The constant dichotomy

Is exhausting

Being pulled

Multiple ways

Always

What do you want

What do I want

Who's crying

Who's scared

Who's making inappropriate jokes

How do I know

When we don't know who's here

Boom by Pen and Mia

Too afraid to let my feelings show,
I sit here mourning my positive glow.
But my feelings bubble, and multiply,
Until, boom, I can do nothing but cry.
Emotions explode, rationality implodes.
Scratching screaming detaching dreaming.
Emotions rage, red is all I can see,
Lashing out, unable to gain clarity.
Triggered pain subsides, I'm left numb,
Trying to forget whatever I have just done.

Memories by Mia

Memories stirred, not shaken.
Hoping to write joy, not depression.
We're not there yet, but almost.
Now, that we've had a drastic change of host.
After a longstanding suppression.
We've been through some regression,
Opening up to, essentially, possession.
And now, we've been awakened,
We can hopefully progress.
No longer repressed.

Cursed by Mia and Maya

Mystical metamorphosis.
She hoped for rebirth,
She paid for a curse.
The butterfly,
It wasn't her in the end,
But a dragonfly,
Disguised.
She tried to beautify,
But became a samurai fire fly!
Scared, she ran, insects personified,
Chasing alongside.
A cerebral apartheid.
At last, they glide.
Bleary-eyed, into a gunfight.
Knights and sprites.
Dynamite and Jacobites.
After the blight,
Sitting in moonlight,
Extraditing acolytes,
Butterflies rise.

Trickling Sanity by Mia

Thoughts,
Like sanity,
Trickling away.
Atrophy,
In the brain.
Synaptic rot,
In distorted knots.
A competence drain.
Appallingly attached.
Disordered and detached,
Scratching and mismatched.
Haunting days and nights,
Trying to find the light.

Back From Hell by Berlou

The journey back from hell,
is not straight forward.
Escaping the black, the yells,
and the tortured.
Panic attacks and dark magic spells,
coming from the disordered.
Watch out for traps from the rebels,
and ignore the scoreboard.

Dear Past Me by Mia

Dear past me
You have DID
Oh, sorry, that's
Dissociative identity disorder
Google it
I know you don't believe me right now
But you will
It explains a lot
And now you have the chance to heal sooner
You're welcome

Our Stars by Mia and Stef

Our stars aligned,
A serendipitous situation.
Allowing the revelation,
Healing and lucidity,
Through objective lunacy.

Juxtaposition by Mia

DID is an existence of juxtaposition

Nothing makes sense
Everything makes sense

I'm real but I'm not real

I'm you but I'm not you
You're me but you're not me

Time passes but doesn't pass

Two worlds connected
But separate

Young but old

Reality by Mia

All that was left of her previous reality:

Sealed by Mia

Flaming swords
Firefights to the death
Charging creatures of terror
All wrapped up
In tiny boxes
Sealed
For
You
In your brain

Her Own by Mia, Berlou, Chiara and Isabel

Her face is not her own.
It's been torn into pieces,
By clone after clone.
Disconnected, and not all known.
Attempting to live,
In spite of disorder, full blown.
Identities like separate entities,
Balanced on stepping stones.
Insanity increasing in intensity,
But we're grateful we're not alone.

Hold Me by Chiara and Mia

Hold me tight,
I'll try not to bite.
But trauma responses,
Have made things black or white.
I'm a rabbit,
In floodlights.
A fox,
Ready to fight.
A bird,
Ready to take flight.
Be patient with me please,
Have some empathy, for my plight.
And when I accidentally bite,
Please hold me tight,
And wait for my unicorn to come back,
She'll make me sweetness and light.

Welcome by Caris, Mia and Jessica

Let your alters
Do what they want
You never know
One might be a savant

Their needs will vary
They'll be contrary
But work with them and listen
You don't know who'll glisten

There will be dark
Hiding within
It's made it's mark
Caused by sin

The sin of others
But it's you that suffers
And with the feeling
Comes the healing

Have open arms
And an open heart
With an open mind
They can have a fresh start

They may be scary
They're probably just weary
With love and understanding
You'll feel you expanding

Opening doors

Welcoming whores
Those who swear and shout
Who always act out

Find them a channel
And give them some flannel
Keep sending them love
They'll meet you above

When their rage is diminished
You'll find they were unfinished
They can see clearly
And they'll love you sincerely

Late by Pen

It's never too late
To find out you've got DID
And have to heal every trauma
That ever happened
Find them sooner
Heal you sooner
It's why we're loud
And we've got nothing else to do

Thank You by Mia

Thank you
For being so open
Never giving up
Trusting your intuition
Sacrificing your life
For us inside
Craving our own lives
Through you
Thank you
For letting us be
For giving us our voice
For allowing us to tell our stories
Thank you Amber
For letting me be me

If We Never Met by Mia

If we never met
We'd never have known
Why she suffered
All alone
Anxiety and depression
Devouring her life
Never able to break even
Endless strife
They say I'm exaggerating
That's just invalidating
It was hard
They were scarred
There were profound
Invisible bars
She was drowned
Without her stars
Dragging souls
Never achieving goals
Invisible battles
Always belittled
They never knew
Why it was so hard
Once they grew
And had her regard
They saw each other
They could recover
They could now align
And were able to shine

Reflections by Mia

Reflections

Coming closer

Unknown selves

Presenting problems

Chariots of chaos

Charging through

Wanting attention

To be the lesson

Who are you

Who am I

Together

We see each other

Reflecting back

I speak the truth she cannot

I cry about things she says don't matter

But she admits

She'd cry too

If she was honest

Creative Lies by Mia

The brain provides,
Creative lies.
Hiding secrets,
And parts who cry.
Behind the eyes,
More disguise,
Smokescreen after smokescreen,
Hide butterflies,
And parts who died.

Bury the Pain by Mia, Berlou and Isabel

Bury the pain
If you want it to gain
Power and momentum
It will beat like a drum
You can hide it in your brain
But it will turn to venom
And make you insane
From the day you went numb

It Happened by Mia

She could have faded
To nothing
But she fought
She was strong
She said
I
Am
Here
This
Happened
To
Me
And someone else listened
Was open enough
To acknowledge
Embrace
Love

See by Mia and Ray of Sunshine

I look to find you,
Do you see me?
You're the only one,
Who knows that we're a we.
And I'm me.
Hold me close,
Validate me and agree,
Hold me through the mirror,
Let's drink a cup of tea,
There's no need to shiver.
This is the only place,
That we can both be,
Together, behind our face.
Please, set me free?
Let me out of the headspace,
And let me be me?

Her Wolves by Maiya

The wolves were getting restless.

Forcing her forwards, it would be monstrous: they'd be uncensored.

Antsy and irritated, she knew the risk was there, rationality suspended.

Succumbing was easy, she surrendered: peace endangered.

Igniting craving, she gets pulled inwards.

A silent peace, an unknowing release.

The wolves run free, with no referee, unbounded discoveries.

Face by Mia

There are scared children
The future
Is unknown
The person in the mirror
Not who she used to be
Her face
No longer her own
But shared
With many
Her face
Is Mia's face
Is Stef's face
Is Alex's face
Is Isabel's face
Is Berlou's face
Is Chiara's face
Is Berwoo's face
Is Ray of Sunshine's face
Too

Trauma Drama by Mia

Childhood trauma.

Oh shut up, another drama.

Get over it, it's in the past,

Focus on the future and don't look back.

It doesn't work like that,

Our bodies remember every act.

And when it's not processed,

It eats away, producing psychosis,

Depression, anxiety, physical incapacity.

These wounds need healing,

But you need to lean into them.

They don't heal themselves,

It takes time and love to fix hell.

The more it hurts, the deeper it goes,

You feel like you're unboxing your own hearse,

As pains are exposed.

Apparently, it's worth it in the end,

Although we're yet to find this mystical mend.

But we keep fighting through,

Like a broken record stuck in glue,

Running mental programs again and again,

Boring family and friends.

How long does healing take?

Will it be worth the break after break?

They say it will be, but it feels fake.

Apparently, it will be worth it in the end,

I hope so, I can't wait until she's smiling,
and I can be with my best friend.

Still by Mia

After all this time
We're still all here in this head
Not psychosis then?

The me that you see by Maiya

The me that you see
Looks like one person
Nothing but a wannabe
She's actually a perversion
A mental amputee
A self of dispersion
Her mind a place of detainees
All progress an exertion
Adios history
Now: ego immersion

Amnesia by Mia, Pen and BTM

Emotional amnesia,
Harder to notice than episodic amnesia.
Day to day memories are vague but there.
But it's like it happened to someone else.
Dissociation sometimes makes memories more like
knowledge.
I know that happened, but it's a blank memory...

The Inner World by Mia, BTM, Peach and Pen

We think it's a dark place
Because we can't go there
I'm unable to exist
In both these nightmares

But inside we live
Another life unknown
It was a mess
But we've all grown

Broken down walls
Mended broken pieces
Little girls woken from a well
Where they went to sleepsies

Decades frozen in time
To prevent more pain
The brain did what it could
To save us again and again

Fragmented and disordered
It was too effective
For decades it hid
It's secrets from perspective

Waiting until it was safe
Ironically, Covid gave us space
Let us sink deep inside
Peeling layers and finding parts who died

Now we're here
And we're also there
Still in the dark
But we hold each other with care

We keep going, healing is messy
And we're stuck in this fray
We're brave and stupid
And putting our healing on display

Mental Oceans by Mia

My mind feels like an ocean,
Chopping, changing, constant commotion.
Thoughts ebb and flow,
Waves of emotion come and go.
I feel like a raft, lost at sea.
Smashed and splashed,
I cry, hoping you see me,
Despite my tides, my extensive debris.
Together we're voyaging, to heal this psyche.

Ashes by Berlou

Bathing in ashes from the past,
My wounds are healing with the salt.
Why is this necessary, we ask?
Pouring life, heart and soul,
Out of fingers, pains draining,
Shaking trauma out of bones.
They say it's healing,
Why does it hurt so much?
She says keep feeling,
But I scream inside, with every touch.
I pour my pain, into the guitar.
It rips like flames, through my mind,
My arms shake, my blood pulses,
My heart races, with tonal impulses.
Mia's here, she keeps me going,
When I wish I could throw it all in.

The Well by Maiya

We're not exactly certain,
How deep the well is.
Thanks to the invisible curtain,
Memories are repressed.
The amnesia,
Like the strongest anaesthesia.
You can lose decades down there,
In unconscious despair.
That's where lost souls go,
Tragically solo.

Children Fall Out of a Mind by Peach, Mia, Pen, Chiara and Ray of Sunshine.

Unpicking pieces,
Of a fragmented person.
Finding Peaches,
Kitties and Lollies,
All separate creatures.
Children fall out of a mind,
Trapped in time.
Undeserved of this pain,
They seek play,
Want to have names,
Be validated and seen,
In spite of being extreme.
You might think we're scary?
We're equally wary.
You think it's a fun game,
A head full of different names?
Sadly, we're caused by trauma.
TV dramatises DID,
But we're just broken pieces,
Of a person's psyche,
Mental diseases,
So we can be spiky.
Trying to heal,
After this insane reveal.
We do this in sight,
To highlight this plight.
We aren't alone,
1-3% of the population have DID, full blown.
So here we are,
We have a voice,

And we're lucky,
We have that choice.

Demented by Mia

A demented paradise
Where life is both
So much better
Yet so much worse
I sometimes wish
I hadn't met her

Problem Child by Mia Berlou

Problem child they said
Won't sleep at night
It's all in her head
Cries and fights
Won't stay in bed
Speaks of monsters out of sight
Filled with fear and dread
Away with the fairies
Suffered decades of anxieties
Until she found the child inside
Who was scared and cried

Multiplicity by Mia and Pen

It must be hard
To imagine the experience
Of multiplicity
Without living it
I think we'd have struggled
Before knowing we're a we
Where we are
This is just our experience
All systems are unique
We're in a dark room
No light at all
But we can sometimes feel each other
Depending how close we are
And if someone thinks something
You can kind of join in
Might go different directions
So consciousness gets blurry
Before we knew
We all thought we were the same person
(I didn't, I, Mia, didn't exist)
(But I remember a life that I didn't live)
Amber spent a lot of time
Questioning her thoughts
Wondering why she thought things
That weren't aligned with how she felt
We often don't share any emotional information
We can be in the same space
Both in the face
Talking
And not know how each other feels
Other times emotions bleed

You'll be hit with intense feelings
With no context
Won't even know what it's about
Just that it hurts
A lot
For us
Everything needs sharing and healing
And to heal a pain
That's been around for decades
Takes time
It's why we write
We know it works
It needs releasing physically too though
So we walk everyday
And do yoga
When traumas are processed
There's relief
We've processed all of our trauma
Except the first one
Berlou cried inside
For 36 years
After abuse when we were two
We're still working on healing that
Which is why we're still so messy
If that consuming pain wasn't there
We'd be ok
But we need to heal it

Not DID by Pen

The psych he said
It's all in your head
You've got traits of multiple personality
But definitely not DID
Emotionally unstable - yep
Histrionic - that's a check
Anxious avoidant personality disorder
Mixed personality disorder
Mixed dissociative (conversion) disorder
But not dissociative identity disorder
You're just crazy
Making it up
Dramatically unstable
That's a nice rub
A nice big question mark
Over early memories
False memory syndrome
You watched too many documentaries
DID is far too rare
More prevalent in women
Irrelevant that it's as common as red hair
Developing countries
They have it more
The sad trauma disease
Not here, where there isn't war
So we have our shit diagnosis
Says we're fake and over dramatic
Amber isn't here
We all feel the first trauma
But it's not real
We just like the drama

No we can't have another assessment
An hour on the phone with an incompetent
Is all we get
While we tell the police this happened
And a piece of paper says it didn't
So we wait
Mia writes
We want to fight
But it feels like the world's against us
And we're sick of making a fuss
I'm not even real
So why do I feel

Floorboards by Mia

Beneath the floorboards
Are the secrets
They creak and groan
Boxed up and alone
Festering they grow
Never known
Breeding rot and decay
Destroying days
Weeks, months, years
While you're crying confusing tears

Face Looks Back by Pen

Looking in the mirror
The sad old face looks back
Suddenly the eyes sparkle
Excited and invigorated
Small honey eyes
Scream to be seen
Searching for magic
Hoping for help

Either Side by Jessica and Mia

They sit either side of me,
Influencing, even when I feel free.
The angels and the evil banshee,
Compete to be today's trustee.
During the week, the angels wail and plea,
When the weekend comes, faith falls, the angels flee.
And the banshee screams with glee.

Smokescreen by Maiya

I wait for our winter to melt,
Sixteen months of hell was dealt,
While we pulled back the smokescreen,
Through this extended quarantine.
Traumatically processing, every tiny tragedy,
A late awakening, to our DID.
“My trauma isn’t bad enough!”
It was just normal kid stuff?
We shout with every other person,
Trying to navigate this mind prison.
I hope the snow melts soon,
And our spring can bloom.

Shattered by Mia

She was
Shatterable
Fragmented in her mind
She fought to find herself
And found strength
Passion
Love

Facade by Mia

The facade,
Ripped apart.
Fragmented scars,
Dissected through memoir,
Healed with poetry and guitar.

Changes by Mia Berlou

My face doesn't change
But we all share it
Consciousness changes
But the face stays the same
My faces change
Everyday
You don't see
The difference
But underneath
My changing faces
Float back and forth
Bringing sadness and warmth
My faces change
Undetected
Reflected back at me
Moods float past
As faces switch
Helping

Pride by Mia and Maya

Pride

Lost

Long ago

Disintegrated

Along with so much else

I've never been so free

Little old me

To say what I feel

Unrestricted

Mostly

Occasionally she says no

But she lets me share

Things

She never would

Yes

Pride isn't something we have much of

She lies

She's full of pride

Her standard high

Always has been in the sky

I must I must

I want I want

A first class degree

Nothing else mattered

Mia by Caris and Jessica

You might have wondered
Who she is
She says she's seven
And yet is constructing poetry
Many could only hope to write

She is a version
Of an old alter
Here since we were very young
Penelope has driven our successes
And achievements

She got a first class degree
Mia is Penelope
But she split
Kicked out her pain
Anxieties and trauma

Mia was free
She got younger
Maya suffered
Taking Pen's pain
Growing with it herself

Boxed by Maya

Silent tears, And untold fears.
Stamped down.
Boxed up.
Ignored, they simmer.
Stewing bitterness.
Un-cried, unleashed,
You'll find a beast.
Cry your eyes out in the present,
Avoid their maleficence.

Reset by Unknown

I think I've been reset,
My memories feel distant.
Those I know, I feel like I've never met.
Names are unfamiliar.
Have I been reconfigured?
Why do I forget?
I don't know who I am.
Is this part of the plan?
Where are the people.
My face is not my own,
I'm outside of my body.
Why am I alone?
Everything seems foggy.
Time is weird,
It makes no sense.
All my fears,
The present feels like past tense.
How has life come to this?
What else have we missed?
Through this living hell.
Can we heal?
Is there a chance we can turn out well?
All we do is feel.
And yet, still we're unwell.
Clarity. Writing helps.
We were blurry.
Not sure if there is someone else,
Sharing worries.
No one really defined.
Hearing stories,
Identities combined.

Ungrounded.
Floating around outside.

The Tree by Mia

Broken by circumstance
Divided the tree grew
Separate and distinct
Branches evolved independently
Travelling through time
Unaware of each other
But always there
Supporting
Balancing
They grew
Together

Fragments by Mia and Chiara

As broken and petrified
Fragments of self
Cascade into the present
Traumas a dime a dozen
Endlessly repeating
Healing patterns
Resetting selves
Back to square one
As they're processed
Ready to start again

Woman or a Girl by Mia

Confused
Woman or a girl
Didn't Madonna sing about this
Or Britney
Or both
The woman's body
Faded away
As the children took over
Bringing Care Bears
Lego
My Little Ponies
Draining maturity
Curves and shape
Leaving
A child's body
Where children try to live
A life
They had stolen from them
The woman
Embraced them
Let's them do
What they need to do
To heal
In spite
Of what others might think
She allows the children
To use their own voices
Through her face
She gives them space
And they heal
Joining her

Old
When they can

The Broken Glass by Isabel and Chiara

The broken glass, it's not built to last
Spills it's love fast and drains cash
Intrinsically influenced by the past
Since the day it was smashed
It consumes but never maintains
Draining away, life doesn't even splash

The Illusion by Penelope

When frosted memories melt away,
And the illusion is lifted,
Initial shock, seeing the display.
How could life be this twisted?
It's no wonder we delayed,
We could have been committed.
A histrionic cliché,
Sanity omitted.

Rollercoaster by Mia and Berlou

A rollercoaster of emotions
Never synchronised
Constant commotion
Identities disguised
Healing in slow motion
Fighting against the collective
Selves swirling in a mental ocean
No common objective
Finding each other, a surprise
A year spent introspective
And retrospective
Sick of being paralysed
No longer hypnotised
Now, together, we rise

Game Haiku by Berlou

Dissociation

The strongest magic woven
Between all of us

It plays a good game
Of illusions and guesswork
That we try to play

Reclaim Life by Unknown

In that moment,
We saw each other.
Can't help but lament,
The lost years, abundant.
Too late for atonement.
Can we stop the tears?
Leave the fears?
Reclaim life arrears?

Why by Jessica, Pen and Mia

Better tell them why they're here,
But we don't want to exasperate fears.
'Cause if we don't, they won't understand,
Why we feel hanged and damned,
It's a sad and sorry story,
We tell them it will end in glory.

Blurry by Berlou

Here with you
We're blurry
But true
Fragments
Of a whole
Disjointed
The illusion
Lifted late
Depression
Not our only fate
Exposed
Our selves
Will be judged
Ignored
But they do it anyway
It's all we've got
And we don't know
What else to do
We've mentioned
Our will to die
It's all that's left
Often

Please by Mia

Burning fires
From deep within
Disconnected desires
Preach peace and sin

Palpitations and shivers
Tremors and seizures
Shaking and vibrating
All part of the process
Foolish to suppress

The collective traumas
Shared at last
All-consuming dramas
About the past

We hope to settle
Confident in our identities
The littles, so special
Yes, we have complexities
And unresolved perplexities
But perhaps an unexpected ease
Might surprise this collective, please

Give Me Your Hand by Mia, Berlou and Amber

Give me your hand
And I'll give you my heart
Open your eyes
To my others parts
Give them your hand
And give us a fresh start

Dragons by Maiya

The fires were raging,
Dragons descending.
Clockwork chaos creating,
An illogically impending,
Identity shaking,
Destruction of construction.

As the buildings burn,
The dragons yearn.
Searching inside for debris:
Any salvageable decree.
Challenging constructs,
Anything, that might not destruct.

Within the flames,
Attempts to ascertain,
The conquering crusaders.
She arises from the blaze,
An iridescent invader,
Irrevocably fazed.

Attempts to regenerate,
Searching for a soul mate.
Dressing the dragon,
In elegant armour and warpaint.
Igniting her passion,
Finally, without constraint.

Layers by Mia

I peel my layers
Everyday
Ever changing
Always the same
My fractured selves
Come out to play
But find
There's just dismay
I can't do much
Not even clean
My living room's a mess
And my life is lived through a screen

She by Pen

She is
Who is she
She doesn't know
She doesn't see
Invisible selves blur
Like musical chairs
Emotionally charged
She fights to find answers
The others come forward
Holding hands
We're here and we're you
We hurt and we need to
Spend time in the body
Heal from the inside out
We all have secrets
We'd rather not shout
But validation is healing
Mia knew that
See me and validate me
I want to be free
Don't just assume
There's only one of me
My consciousness is fragmented
Pieces reside
Separate and fried

The Night by Mia and Pen

The night is creeping in,
It's been coming for a while.
Scratching at the door,
Taking your smiles.
As painful, and hard, as it is,
Hold the trial, and denial.
Don't be hostile.
Focus on survival,
Together, you'll walk miles.
But, the night needn't be so terrifying.
Offer your crocodile some chamomile.
They'll spew bile while purifying.
While identifying the horrifying,
Temporary life exile, while healing juveniles.
Eventually, unifying,
You'll see how, when all is reconciled, the night is so
worthwhile.

Chasing by Mia, Louise and Lolly

Never give up chasing your rainbows.
Even when the darkest clouds hang,
Thick and heavy in the air,
Your unicorn is with you.
Even on the saddest days,
She's there,
Holding your hand,
Waiting for the sun to shine,
Your dreams to bloom,
And life to blossom again.

We Used All the Prompts by Mia and Maya

And now I rise.
No longer I, but we.
A revolving door,
Reflections of selves.
Years spent stargazing,
Searching for each other,
White noise, eliminating perception.
The fight,
To build the bridge and enable migration,
Between selves,
To find,
Persephone to Aphrodite;
Narcissus to Ares.
An imaginary modern warfare,
Fighting a valley of doubts.
Immersed in open water,
Searching for an Atlantis.
Trusting the sixth sense.
Together planting the seeds,
Together growing,
Into a metaphorical majestic pine.
In which, we've built a nest,
A honeycomb sanctuary,
Of indigo children.
Silent pride,
As lost boys
And maids of honour,
Regenerate, reincarnate.
The lady of the lake rises,
Her green eyes glowing,

A temple of potential.

Democracy by Mia and Chiara

Pacifying the scarred convicts,
Sick of our cobweb of monotony.
Always invisible conflicts,
Unable to see the prodigies.
We established an ego eclipse,
Now, we're a democracy!

Layers by Mia

Just how many?

Layers can there be?

There can't be this many complexities!

We're a joke.

She's Coming by Carabel

“Sssh, can you hear that?”
“Quick be quiet, she’s coming!”

“I think I’m crazy, by the way,
it wasn’t me talking,
but my subconscious came out to play.”
She was confused and mentally cracking.

The truth behind her fate,
it’s not her it’s me,
for we’re all stuck in her head,
fragmented parts, you see.

To find us she had to question
her reality, and dive deep inside.
At times she could barely function,
depression was eating her alive.

We heard her looking for us,
offering love and healing schemes.
“My eyes are waiting to see you,
you’re the phantom in my dreams”

As the children got braver,
more came out to see.
She said “You remind me of someone I used to know,
oh was that me?”

The children asked to be her friend,
for they had lots to tell.
Now she was enlightened,

but their grief was embroidered like a spell.

The darkness had consumed for so long,
it had nearly eaten them all alive.
But the love they had was strong,
there was light at the end of the tunnel and it was time
to revive.

Healing took months and years,
processing every thing that ever hurt.
There were so very many tears,
and it was led by a pink extrovert.

Would you like yourself when you met you?
Well she has more love for her parts inside,
now we've had this breakthrough,
even though we're all parasites!

The Awakening by Mia Berlou

It not a fast process
A dissociation awakening
It's always going to take time
Turns your whole world upside down
Isn't something you can do overnight
Life will feel like sci fi blight
Acceptance of each other
Is the biggest hurdle
Seeing and believing
Things that aren't tangible
And are not even likely
Takes a minute
To accept what is not
Feel the truth
Accept the abuse
Integrate, heal and fuse
And choose life over a noose

Portrait by Mia Berlou

Posing for a family portrait
Illuminating our collective fate
Trying to hide the insanity
But shining light on the depravity
We try to smile with our mismatched faces
Lacking, we know we lost aesthetic races
But we show the world anyway
I'm sorry
This is us
We're here to stay

Ending by Mia Berlou

Clarity descends
The illusion ends
Stops the pretence
Stuck in suspense
Life demands defence
It gets intense

Bidding Farewell by Mia and Isabel

Bidding farewell to who we were
Our whole life has been a blur
We thought we were one but we are many
It took a covid provoked epiphany
Sat at home for months on end
Sinking through the mind we found company
It turns out there's a price for enlightenment
Finding your shadows will cost you dearly
And healing them will be beastly
But once you've loved the ugly
They'll bloom, and you'll see their beauty

All the Things by Mia

Now I remember
All the things I left behind
Memories were deleted from my mind
My subconscious has been redesigned

Terrible by Mia

U no what

All things considered

Amber didn't do a terrible job of life

My Mia by Amber and Jessica

There's space in my heart for you
There always has been, it's true
The optical illusion of being NT
But we're not: we're a we
And now, Mia, it's you and me
You, me and our head mates
A mismatched bunch of miscreants
And together, we will rebuild
Thanks to you, you're so strong-willed
So much stronger than we were
You're basically a trauma connoisseur
This last year, you saved so many
Fragmented souls aplenty
We needed your softness
All you've done is support us
You think I should be embarrassed
Just because you're the rarest
You write with wild abandon
You're creating all expansion
We couldn't have healed
Without what you've revealed
You're also a much better poet than I
Who on earth has the patience for this
I can't do it Mia, it's too hit and miss
I'll leave the poems to the pro
You're the poetry aficionado

Thank You Mia by Tiger

She speaks our truth
She's the strongest here
Thinks she's weak
Because she can articulate
She overshares
Thinks no one cares
We're grateful we have her
We hide behind her
She hides behind Amber
And Amber hides behind her
She's all of our hero
We just wanted to say
She cries that she's weak
When in fact it's the opposite

Mia by Caris and Kitty

The personification of hope

She drives us forwards

Says

It can be better

It will get better

It won't be

For nothing

She's fought so hard

To bring us this far

Writing

Our trauma

Back

Into the past

Where it belongs

Trust by Mia

Cultivating me
Prioritising my own
Existence
Peace
Submitting
Unquestioning
Watching the sunset
It's beyond my control
I know she will rise again
I give my trust to her
I believe in her
I surrender
To her
Now

Shy Smiles by Mia

Feeling shy smiles
From behind
Cute little girls
Hiding in shadows
Excited for a new life
One with less strife
The healing achieved
Now a different hurdle
We stick together
Strong as long as we all support each other

Love's Light by Mia Berlou

Let go, feel life flow.

Rejoice in vulnerability,

Permit passions to run away.

Let them say what they want to say.

Feeling your feelings is key to healing

Surrender to the process, let love possess.

Scared, she acts out, screams and shouts.

Find her in the darkest corners of soul,

The night is where love's light glows.

Can't Stop by Pen, Amber, Mia and Berlou

I can't stop writing poems about you,
It's intrinsic, you know it's true.
You're part of me, you changed my view,
Opened my heart and soul,
Made me give up control.
I can't stop writing about you,
Because you're me, and I'm you.

Embrace by Alex and Mia

Hey baby, you don't have to live this way.
Embrace yourself everyday,
Your shadows and your light.
Find out just how bright,
You can shine.

Night by BTM

Night is falling
But it won't last forever
Your future is calling
I know that there's pressure
You're sick of crawling
You feel like your own oppressor
But you're evolving
Slowly growing your feathers
Traumas are resolving
You'll get to your treasures

Challenged by Mia and Ray of Sunshine

As the dust settles
We sit and look around
We challenged our reality
And look what we found
Children hidden deep inside
Some asleep, others cried
Now we're done with this phase
Let's bloom and amaze

DID we write

Are my
thoughts
my own?

Thank you so much for reading. If you're struggling through your own healing, we know how hard it is, keep going, it's worth it. Love and patience, lots of love and patience.

We also want to share others' stories and give other people with DID a voice, we're hoping to collaborate with DID systems on anthologies that will help those writing, empowering them to share their stories, helping readers navigating their own healing journeys, raising awareness of DID and countering the immense amount of misinformation there is about a disorder caused by trauma, which is very difficult to diagnose, accept, and heal from.

If you'd like us to help you share your story, get in touch with us at [did.we.write](https://www.instagram.com/did.we.write) on Instagram or did.we.write@gmail.com.