

**INK & ECHO**  
*Poetry & Spoken Word*

**FACEDOWN**

Nicholas J. Pirro

I drowned in the pain,  
a puddle in the rain  
I was forced to play in,  
now I'm facedown in.

Breathing mud,  
tasting blood,  
asking God if this is punishment  
or just what living does.

I tried standing tall,  
but tall men still fall,  
and pride doesn't soften the ground  
when you've given your all.

So I stayed there.

Facedown.

Not dead-  
just tired of proving  
I was alive.

Tired of carrying storms  
like they were mine to survive.  
Tired of saying I'm fine  
when fine was a lie  
I had told for so long  
even I believed it sometimes.

Then you found me.

Didn't pull me up.  
Didn't tell me to fight.  
Didn't hand me another reason  
I had to make everything right.

You just laid beside me  
in the rain.

And for once,  
someone didn't ask me  
to explain the pain.

You let the water fall.  
Let me curse it all.  
Let me be something other  
than the man who catches everyone  
when they fall.

And somewhere between  
the thunder  
and your hand finding mine,

I realized-

maybe rock bottom  
isn't always where we die.

Sometimes it's where we finally stop  
long enough  
to look at the sky.

So I rolled over.

Rain still falling.  
Pain still calling.

Nothing magically healed,  
nothing suddenly right-

but there you were,

and somehow the darkness  
didn't feel quite as much  
like night.

I had drowned in the pain,  
a puddle in the rain  
I was forced to play in-

but I won't stay facedown in it.

Because you taught me  
something the storm never could:

getting back up  
isn't pretending  
the fall didn't hurt.

It's knowing it did-

and rising

anyway.

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### **About the Poet**

Nicholas J. Pirro is a writer, researcher, and publisher whose work explores the intersections of human experience, leadership, resilience, and change. Founder of Pyrrhic Press and Ink & Echo, his creative writing turns toward love, loss, memory, family, and the complicated experiences that shape a life. His poetry favors emotional honesty over convention, finding meaning in the things we carry, the people we love, and the words that remain after a moment has passed.

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