

What is a no?

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An arbitrary two-letter word?
A sound that echoes while no one seems to hear it?

Is it something I should yell?
Maybe keep it at a whisper
Translate into something else that they'll finally understand.

Maybe the sound is wrong
The intonation somehow off
Maybe I didn't say it right or lacked the conviction.

When I say it again and again and again
Repeat myself until hoarse,
Is it even a word anymore?

But where did the yes come from?
Did I agree while I wasn't aware?
What is it about me when I don't ever say the words?

Was the fear not enough?
The panic I know was palpable

The way I ran every time, begging for it to end.

Am I supposed to get violent?

Should I have to?

Is it my fault then if I don't?

When it happens again and again

Is it something wrong with me?

Is this what they mean by insanity?

Edward Anthony Tortorelli is a current student studying sociology as well as too many STEM subjects. He loves a good book, traveling, and spending time with his pets.