

Submitted to Writer's HQ weekly Friday Flash forum.

Hey, my life in a metaphor.

I always wanted to be a jelly.

I ended up as ice cream.

Both are sweet, so what's the problem?

A few minutes left.

Let's deconstruct.

Jelly, conceptually, is simple. It can be enjoyed on its own or in combo with other tasty treats.

Jelly can be moulded into fantastic shapes and colour combinations.

Hey hey, cue the celebrations.

Cut the jelly into cubes, dissolve them completely in boiling water in a suitable receptacle. Stir with a metal spoon until goes clear and transparent.

No lies, no subterfuge, just honesty.

If one is impatient, and let's face it, which of us isn't impatient for something in this miserable life we endure, add ice cubes instead of cold water. The ice cubes will help set the jelly faster. Pour the thickened jelly in the chilled mould or little plastic containers which we have recycled.

Recycled lives. Waste not want not.

Chill in the fridge for half an hour for a soft-set jelly, or one hour for a really firm grip on life.

Ah, wouldn't living be peachy if living were as easy as making a jelly. Never did find out why no-one makes lime flavoured jelly anymore.

Can't have life without a bit of disappointment on the way.

No, my life has never been a jelly - fragrant, tasty, pattern set, future locked in. A bowl of cherries, or maybe strawberries.

No sirree. My life has been more ice cream than jelly.

Ice cream is way more technical. Tricky. Lots of whisking, a few soft peaks here and there. Can't have peaks without troughs. Way more ingredients in an ice cream life. Food processor or blender, blitz to a smoothness. Mixing, simmering, stirring, whisking, beating, folding. Freeze until required.

Some of us are never required.

Not by anyone.

Not loved, wanted or cherished.

Some of us are just pitied.

You see, a jelly will just wait, in the fridge, wibbly wobbly but set in its ways. Take it out the fridge, it sits there, keeping shape.

Ice cream on the other hand is over-sensitive and disaster prone. If someone shows enough interest to defrost it, ready to be enjoyed, well, that really needs to happen, right? Ignore ice cream and it melts to useless mush. Can't be eaten. Can't be drunk. Just pour me away.

Unpalatable. My life as ice cream.

Taken from the fridge by someone I thought really wanted me.

Whoa, steady there. Devilish wind thirteen stories up in the night sky. Here on my parapet.

She is down there, in the arc lights, beside the negotiator.

Feel sorry for him. Tonight, he fails.

Feel no sorrow for she who thawed me out.

Eyes bigger than belly as mum used to say.

Wanted her ice cream and her cupcake.

I can't be talked down.

I am emotional slush, ice cream melting. A process with no reverse.

I wish I were jelly.

I close my eyes and take one last step.