

IMPOSTER PRINCESS

Don't you give up now,
 baby girl
you've got the world on your side

and when that imposter voice pipes up
 remember all the tears you had cried
 begging to arrive
 at the grand palace entry way
which now you face

Yet instead of going in
 you so nervously pace
Maybe it's easier to chase
 than it is to seize
 like a puppy with a rabbit
 all you think to do is freeze

Because your excuses have expired -
 you're at the point of no return
But you don't want to go back,
 baby girl
Remember your old world?
 and that uneasy heartfelt sense
 that there must be something more?

Darling, this is it:
 you're standing at the door

Yet you're terrified
 of what's inside
 what if there's no soft space to hide?

The throne looks shiny from afar,
 but what if the seat is hard?

What if it's lonely at the top and...

Girl, you had better stop
 with foolish defenses
 that keep you playing small

Your destiny is ringing
 and you had better take the call

Don't be afraid of your own gifts -

even Elsa got a grip

Why suppress your own power?
Why lay low in a high tower?

You wouldn't have been brought here
if you were not welcome in

But go ahead,
enjoy the porch
until you're ready to begin

No one will force you -
we all just want to see you win

But that doorknob can be turned
by your hand alone

and you have the strength to do it -
please may that be known!

It's not a strength of force
- you don't have to push or pound or punch

Give a self-assured turn,
and darling... I have a hunch

that the weight will be lifted
the knob will twist with ease
the door gently glided open by the warmest breeze
of majestic angel wings

You're taken aback by the dazzling glow
but quickly your eyes adjust

Automatically you elevate
all you feel is trust
in yourself
in the world
in your path, baby girl

You never needed to fear
being blinded by the light

because you've got the world on your side
and your future
is bright

DARING QUESTION

What would you do
if you knew
you have nothing to prove?

That the only thing that matters
is staying in *your* groove

So instead of plotting your next move
What if...
you fell into the flow?
because ,darling, don't you know?

You are enough
as you are

You're a vibrant, golden star
that lights up the sky simply by existence

What if
you forfeit your insistence
that if it's not the sun,
must not be anyone

What about the constellations
with their natural, inborn placements?

They didn't have to push or force to get there,
and that's a magic we can share

So ask it if you dare...

What would you do
if you knew
you have nothing to prove?

SILENT STORY

A Silent Story
 does it even count?
A fallen tree in the forest
 does *not* make a sound.

A play without an audience
 A film with no fans
A manuscript unpublished
 A song...with no dance.

Perfume never smelled
Vintage wine unconsumed
 (well, that would never happen
 -then we'd really be doomed)

But a pastry gone stale?
 A curtain never called
Painted lips left unkissed
 Sales missed at the mall

“Oh, what a shame”

How I hate. That. Thought.

How helpless is pity
 when we ache for what's not?

Products and prose
 unwrapped and unseen
Wasted and forgotten -
 so what's it all mean?

A million words in my journal
 for my eyes alone
They count for nothing
 if they can never be known

You think it's art?
Well I've got bad news:
There's no point in creating
 if the outcome's unused.

Stop, that's not true!
 I tell the voice in my brain

Because if that were the case
none of us could be sane

I loathe myself
for crafting stories still hidden
But...isn't that better
than if they had never been written?

Art should be seen
and I want my words to be felt
But we can't share with others
what we won't do for ourselves.

My words may be forgotten
As will be my fears
because the very act of creation
gives life to our years

Whether clouded in darkness
or shining bright in the sun
Make it anyway, darling!
It's all in good fun

It's not about praise
and it's not about show
What it is about?
I really...don't know

But I know that I cannot
just sit here and yearn
Marching in my place
as I watch the world turn

So I am moving my feet
for whatever it's worth
and if not a single life is affected...
there is still purpose to my birth

I may not recall this piece
even five days from now
But this ephemeral display of my diary
matters somehow.

INDEPENDENT MISCONCEPTION

Independent are we
in this modern age
Radical self-sufficiency
has become all the rage

It's a blessing, we're told
meant for liberation
but if i'm not careful
it becomes a sneaky source of stagnation

"You're so resilient,"
they praise me

Daily I journal, pray, meditate
Left to my own devices
even in crisis
I find myself a solid state

I have a peace within
That I wouldn't trade for gold...

But I'd be lying not to admit:
self-soothing...gets kind of old

Even the prettiest silhouettes cast shadows
and this one can be long
when we poorly redefine
what it means to be "strong"

"Be a strong, independent woman who can do it *all* on her own!"
That has got to be the worst advice I've ever known
Newsflash! Human beings were not designed to function alone

'Dependence' shouldn't be a curse word
We *can* rely on other people

There's a risk, I know,
humans can be deceitful
But asking for help has become some courageous act of vulnerability
to which we resort only of necessity

Sometimes we've no choice -
autonomy is required
I can pay my bills, fight my demons, air my own tires

But I find people generally actually *want* to assist
What we feel is selfish to ask
gives *them* a sense of purpose
We're told to serve the world

but if we don't let ourselves be served
we risk robbing other people
of a sort of healing they deserve

A one man band is impressive
But a symphony makes magic

Our glorification of solitude
Has become something tragic

Just because we can
doesn't mean that we must
Our wings can soar to greater heights
among a flock that we can trust

So lean on someone else's arm
at times you feel unsteady
And when your friend has a win,
celebrate them with confetti

We all need cheerleaders
and wanting them isn't a sin

Keep in mind, without encouragement
no body can win
If we're all existing on islands
wishing to converge
but too afraid to be the first to suggest that we merge
then it's time to restore our human nature
as members of a pack

We can reach our highest good far faster
when we have each other's backs

IT'S IN THE HANDS

The human body
 is but a spirit's residence
Once the soul transitions,
 all that's left is flesh
Gifted to science
 becomes a med student's project

Excavate the cadaver,
 no time to reflect
 on the life that once was
 simply because
 this is a product for training,
 a lesson in biology

But to write it off as such
 discounts psychology

For under that lab coat
 the pupil's heart beats
as he probes at the body
 wrapped in cold, sterile sheets

Treat it as an object, he's told
 Not a life to be mourned
But then something happened
 for which he hadn't been warned

The face? Unrecognizable
 mutilated and vacant
But in another corner of the corpse
 the former life became blatant

"It's in the hands", he said,
 "That's what got me in the feels"
Probe a person's palm
 and ponder what it reveals

A cut on a cuticle
 from plucking fresh sage
A scar on a knuckle
 the remnant of rage
A burn-mark
 left from muffins fetched without a glove
The guitar induced callus
 from strumming songs of love

A ring used to be here
the indent never fades
an emblem of a partner
must have been there for decades

It's through our hands that we bestow
the gift of human touch
The simplest of gestures
that can matter so much

He squeezes mine now as I share
my current despair
The most innocent act
to show that he cares

My hands are small next to his
yet too wide for my baby niece to grip

I never liked my own fingers
so childlike and stubby
I've always resented
the fact that they're chubby
Not like my grandmother's
long and thin
My nails refuse to grow
I guess I'm just not feminine

They swell when it's humid
and shrivel up when it's cold
After hours in the pool
they prune and look so old

But what do looks matter?
When at the tips of our phalanges
lie the snowflakes of our bodies
that brand our identities
Unique stamps for the world
the naked eye can barely see

Fingerprint, thumbprint
imprint on your lover's back
Hands used for waving, for fiving
a clap and a snap.

How fortunate are we
to have ten digits for poking

to annoy our little brothers
give our cat's fur some stroking
to grip what we're smoking
There's power in our hands
for punching and choking

Now in my car
this med student sits
I wonder what caused
the scratch on his wrist
I didn't ask
for fear of being nosy
(nor to disrupt our position so cozy)
But now I wish that I had
for these marks reveal stories
Evidence of moments passed in our day

So I think it's time we all say
"thank you" to our precious hands

For all they do every hour
For giving us the power
to connect, to caress,
to possess, to plant flowers

Because one day
they'll be reduced to 52 bones
for a future doctor's dissection
to devour

