

## POEM 1: I HIT MY HEAD WITH A MOP TODAY

I hit my head with a mop today.  
Four times to be exact.  
It wasn't something I was planning on doing today.  
But I must admit it wasn't as simple as that.

You see, this mop did not offend me.  
It did not attack.  
In fact, I was using it to go over the bathroom floor  
that I thought I had left intact.

But while I was mopping  
it dawned on  
like flashes of light,  
the story of a life  
That was unfortunately mine.

I like to close my eyes every now and then,  
picture scenes from a future coming my way:  
Italian heat, California palms,  
New York City breeze, Swiss Alps,  
linen trousers, airplane cushions,  
script paper, stage lights,  
microphone feedback, slick floors,  
red velvet, camera frames,  
bright silver, carved gold.  
A sweet escape someone sold me years ago  
and I never forgot.

But once I open my eyes, the fantasy fades.  
I'm once again trapped in an endless scene of  
humid talks, shallow breaths,  
burning throats, gritting jaws,  
hard rice, suffocating dinners,  
pulled back hair, bleeding fingers,  
dead reflections, body aches,  
bottles of fire, kegs of rage,  
soft skin, sharp blades.  
A reality someone thought I could carry years ago,  
and I'm starting to fear maybe I cannot.

It's hard to hold on to the salt of the South of France,

when all you can feel is a deadly stone striking the side of your head.

So as I was mopping the floor,  
my skin pleaded and my body begged  
to be reprimanded for its sensitivity to sounds and thoughts.  
The neurons in my brain prickly and scalding  
from the quiet fire in my head.

I don't know how to put out such fires and I've never learned how.  
I tried to think of my future to somehow distract  
but Laurel Canyon and Dolby Theater did not correct.  
So, to keep myself from bleeding, to keep myself from screaming,  
I hit my head with a mop,  
Just four quick whacks.

If you're reading this,  
they did not help.

## POEM 2: PRINCESITA

Little princesses never scream.  
They never lash out, they never bleed.  
We listen to her sweet words of poetry.  
Little princesses always smile.  
Their eyes sparkle, never vile.  
We like to see them shine all the while.

Little princesses are obedient.  
They are a comfort to all, a loyal assistant.  
So if you can't reach your phone  
or if you can't find your glasses,  
Don't worry,  
Little princesses have two little legs to fetch them with.  
We like to keep them on their toes,  
so they know what waits outside the palace.

Little princesses are always proper.  
Anger can't make them angry, sadness can't make them sad.  
So princesses never cry, they never fight.  
They fly like cherub angels, keeping the peace.  
We like to keep them little princesses,  
because what else can they be?

If a little princess screams, lashes out, or bleeds,  
no one will ever want to listen to her.  
Her voice will be too loud, too many booming words.  
It would make our ears hurt and our heads spin...  
because a little princess has ever spoken such things before.

If a little princess doesn't smile,  
if her eyebrow furrow and her lips scowl,  
No one will ever want to look at her.  
Her face would scar, her eyes would startle.  
It would change lives, it would start fires...  
because a little princess has never looked that way before.

If a little princess missed a step  
or she willingly disobeyed,  
no one will ever want to be with her.  
Her legs would transform and her body would strengthen.  
It would crack the foundation, it would offend the others...

because a little princess has never not nodded before.

If a little princess fought or cried,  
no one will ever want to know her.  
Her tulle would rip and her slippers would crack...  
Then, she wouldn't be a little princess anymore.

They'd be ragged old hags everyone detested; a painting done bad.  
Then who would read the poetry, sparkle in the night, find your classes, and keep the peace?  
So behave like a princess even when caught in battles.  
If you die, let it be with proper etiquette.

### POEM 3: LET'S TALK ABOUT SUPPRESSION

Let's talk about suppression,  
How it feels to keep it all in your head.  
Let's talk about suppression,  
The burning eyes and pulsing blood  
Begging to be bled.  
Let's talk about suppression,  
Rising chests and heavy breaths.  
Because you've never been allowed to touch your anger.  
Tantrums, screams, furious sobs, and shrieks.  
They are not for you.  
If you have them, we will reform you.