

## **Generations**

### Patient Poem

words are like these half-frozen chunks of water  
pick the wrong one out the rest slips from your fingers  
the thought lingers but never appears  
you talk baby talk just 'cause I walk baby steps  
and can't hear  
I'm not your "dear."

little sweetie,  
Hear.

the story under the stories I tell you  
in my loose-skin mask  
peering from a past  
layers and layers of dirt  
got me infected down deep where it hurt  
you smile like I ran my first mile  
I never ran, only swam to stay afloat  
asking me to walk across the hall,  
but your mission drowned between us  
in the saline moat

what we both know:  
I know more than you know  
you're all tell,  
but this, My life, is no show  
no joke.  
I get ulcers where you poke  
you know nothing 'bout the long haul  
and yet you say you'll catch me when I fall?  
"just walk cross the hall"?

poke me  
I know I'm not dreaming  
ask me where I am,  
someone next door is screaming  
could be Iraq  
or living under a rock  
all these questions  
what for?  
body aching, but mind is sore  
you say seventh floor  
you're kind of fake,  
I'll never know am I a bore,  
but you're searching eyes have all the answers

mumble... mumble... end stage cancer  
did you know I used to be a dancer?

what we both know:

I know more than you know  
you're all tell, but This, My life, is no show  
no joke  
I get ulcers where you poke  
you know nothing 'bout the ling haul  
and yet you say you'll catch me when I fall?  
just dance cross the hall!

## Full-time Lover

I used to dream of giving my life a makeover,  
now I fall in love with leftovers  
that last the week.  
And moments in my bed, between the worries, when my mind wanders to sleep.

I used to dream of losing weight and lifting weights,  
now I dream of setting down weights  
at the end of a long day  
and you'd think after all the babies and backpacks, laundries and groceries, partners and parents  
I've carried,  
I'd be strong,  
and maybe you'd be right,  
but strong isn't what I want to be in the middle of this sleepless night.

I used to dream of being closer to my mother,  
but I never dreamt I'd be so close to her mess,  
pulling her cheeks apart from each other,  
and I better believe my daughters would do the same for me,  
though now I can only picture them crying for their Mommy,  
and I know I better always be there,  
always be their  
mother.

I suppose I signed up for the twenty-four-seven connection to everyone  
but sometimes I feel so other...

One dream that did come true:  
I am full-time loved.  
For I  
am a full-time lover.

## Waiting for Spring to Come

After a while do snow globes stop waiting for spring to come?

Do they stop feeling rattled by all the strangers who think it's their right to smudge the glass with their fingers as they shake them up?

Do they start comparing themselves with their identical sisters in line beside them on the shelves?

Do the tiny elves, all made up in their hats, ever pound their fists on their skies of glass?

And how would the shopkeeper react if their glass skies cracked?

Would he have them replaced?

or pushed to the back, just to save face?

And after a while would a truck-load of new snow globes come,

to sit sparkly on shelves,

and start waiting for spring to come?

## Snowflakes and Stars

They told us we were snowflakes  
and so we started falling  
creating our own soft space  
for our crystal tentacles to climb and crawl in  
because heaven forbid they break

They taught us we were 70% water  
and so we started drowning \as though the water from our eyes  
could dilute our parents' frowning  
so wash our mouths with soap  
if we build rafts of lies  
or inflatable buoys of hope  
out of our ceaseless clowning

Each day we did right, they gave us gold stars  
and so we started burning  
wanting to travel at the speed of light,  
fast and far,  
we had no time for learning,

but just like snowflakes turn to water on your tongue  
and tears drip down and dry up when they are done,  
when the meteor shower has faded into the night,  
the cold ash flails in the nothingness of the space between nameless suns,  
where instead of time lies forever the absence of light  
and in that place we don't want to be unique or hydrated or bright,  
we just want to feel alright

## Tectonic Plates

Here is your world!

...it's burning

Here is your mind!

...it's churning

and Here is a place to do your playing and learning,

but be careful what you touch!

Here is a place to do your thinking and yearning,

but be careful not to think too much!

My vision, for You...

is to...

invent new stuff!

but if in your tinkering you find something concerning...

we have enough on our tectonic plates,  
don't bring it up.