

Cotton Candy

Morphine tastes like cotton candy.
Pink, not blue.
Makes your brain go fuzzy,
And everything tingles.
Up is down and in is out.
The white rabbit's running late
And Toto's off the yellow brick road.
I click my heels three times,
But no dice.
I'm still stuck.
No going home, not for me.
Snakes hiss around my wrists,
Tan plastic locked tight.
I see white light, all around.
Guess I'm seeing the pearly gates.
Not so pearly and where're the angels?
Unless I'm in hell.
No surprise.
Suicides go to hell.
But suicide didn't work,
So does it count?
Yes, no, maybe so.
Just don't give a damn.
Dorothy and her pigtails,
Clichéd blond and curly.
Whisper, whisper,
Can't hear a thing.
Dorothy melts and there's the Red Queen.
Red hair, red suit, red lips.
Red face too.

Not a good sign.
 “Can’t you behave? Can’t you just be normal?”
 Here we go again.
 Not normal, not right.
 Yada, yada, yada.
 Wizard of Oz just frowns,
 Dark, dark, dark,
 Where his wife is red.
 Never talks, never yells,
 Walks away each time.
 Which of them is worse,
 The Wizard or the Queen?
 Darkness and silence and the monitor going
 Beep-beep.
 Covers up and tucked to,
 Wrapped tight like a corpse.
 Off to Neverland, over the rainbow.
 Maybe it’ll work next time...

Red Violets

Mommy is a broken glass shadow, a smoky apparition
 Wrapped in fire and crowned in lightning
 Her tongue dripping with bitterness.
 Most days she is silent, creeping through the halls
 Smoke curling at her ankles.
 Some nights...Some nights come the screams, the harpy’s shriek.
 I feel my eardrums pound as I press my pillow tight against them,
 Only just muffling the shrill echoes.
 The sun lightens the sky as the screams vanish,
 A water-vapor memory.
 Mother dresses herself in silk and lace,
 Painting on her smile.
 It is a good day today.
 Today her hands have a silken touch, the talons gone.

“Hello, darling”, she coos, hands brushing my hair.
 “Hello, Mama”, I answer, and I dare to kiss her cheek.
 There it is, her true face, a twisted snarl, touched with darkness.
 Blink and back is her smile, a red smile.
 Daddy kisses her also and her smile drops again.
 So fierce, her fury, covered in gauze and sunshine,
 Worn down by time.
 Bubblegum, bubblegum, in a dish, I chant.
 My shoes clack on the hardwood rhythmically.
 Swoosh, goes my jump rope.
 Mama sits nearby, fingers wrapped tight around her sewing needle.
 Blue flower, red flower.
 Roses are red, violets are blue, I think.
 Mother watches her fingers, in and out, up and down.
 The needle pricks and the red flowers staining the linen are not one of thread.
 Drip, drip, ruining her artwork.
 Mama screams.
 I feel myself flying, off to Neverland.
 The wall stops my flight.
 Her eyes are fire, a driftwood fire of blue and green, touched with manic light.
 Her screams are a wolf’s howl at midnight, acid-tainted silver.
 Mama, Mama, I want to cry.
 Yet I am not so stupid.
 I press my hands against the cracks, trying to halt the deluge.
 Little hands, child’s hands, not nearly big enough.
 Roses are red, she told me.
 Long ago, on a good day.
 Violets are blue, I whisper, blue as Mama’s eyes.
 No longer blue, I think as Mama’s hands reach out.
 I feel her talons on my neck; I knew that they’d come back.
 I float, above the floor, above my head.
 Happy thoughts and pixie dust.
 Don’t need Mama’s help to fly.
Mama, I want to cry, but the words don’t seem to come.
 My little hands touch hers, a silent plea for freedom.
Mama, stop, I think, but I know that she can’t hear me.
 Blue fire and cinder curls,
 A skeleton mask dusted with red.
 Like that time I spilled red paint,

When it flew to scatter and speckle.
Not Mama's, I think,
Too much to be Mama's.
Ring around the rosy, pocketful of posies
Ashes, ashes...we all fall down