

One in Four by Carolina Egloff Vega

That rude awakening

When you're fifteen and that metaphorical slap across the face becomes a physical chokehold that drags you out of your childhood and drops you where -

It's not Kansas anymore, Dorothy.

And it's nowhere over the rainbow either.

It's reality.

A little too quick to grasp but too heavy to move

Because this is permanent.

You are an adult in a child's body

With a child's body

Inside your child adult belly

Confused belly

Not because you made a mistake

Just because you made love

Except it became a little more permanent than you had expected

Oh well. There's no need to apologize for what isn't a sin after all

It's a bit too late to change yourself

But it's infinitely too late to change such a brick and mortar society

Built upon one sided beliefs

Cold cut, no exceptions

No exceptions for that one brick that's falling out of place,

From a place too high to imagine

Because imagination is not allowed by bricks

Because they would never grasp the possibilities

Maybe I'm a falling star

Not another stupid brick

Maybe I'm a wish, falling down to earth

And if I pray to every god that bricks aren't supposed to believe in

Maybe Yahweh, Allah, Brighid, Satan, Jehovah, Vishnu, Buddha, Zeus and Venus -will grant it

That I might fall safely, after every single layer of me is burned to ash on contact with this very atmosphere

Burning, cold atmosphere

That maybe I'll survive as a strong yet wary little ashen pebble

Maybe holding onto that hope will be enough

But holding onto that hope is like holding on

As I'm pulling a tiger's teeth

Without anesthesia or any last clue of what I'm doing

Blindfolded ...

But there's a chance, yeah?

There's a chance that anything could happen

Not all of them are expected ...

But they happen

And they're gonna happen beautifully,

You tell yourself,

Because that very second you saw the plus sign

You knew it meant addition

And additions are definitely a one up !

You were so happy

You were happy ...

Just think of it-

Holding her when she's scared

Giving her a bubble bath

Cooking her favorite dinner

Reading her Dr. Seuss until she learns how to read it back
Braiding her hair before school
And helping her with homework later
Being there when no one else is
And accepting whatever gender, orientation, religion or profession she might choose one day

You can do all of those good things good parents do
You are going to be there for her
Regardless
Yes.
You will be there during the good, the bad and the ugly
Because if you aren't, who ever will be?
You're not going to leave her hanging out to die
You're not ever going to leave her

Even though your parents would have left you for this
Their love isn't unconditional
Oh hell no
There is a specific list of things not to do
And amongst them was having a living creature inside your little belly
Because clearly that is what a responsible parent is supposed to do when a confused adult child becomes an adult
child with child

Leave them hanging....

That's what the bricks think is supposed to happen.

That is their definition of good parenting.
Of course it is.

But you're going to be a great mother!
You're going to listen to everything she has to say
Preach , teach
And live as you preach it
Take time to do all of those little things that matter
Keep your promises
Keep her educated
Both on book smarts and people smarts
Keep her safe, and happy, and always optimistic

You can do all of those things!

I could do all of those things!

I could have, should have , would have
done all of those things..

It's not like I ever stopped believing ..
But . This little brick fell down , and crumbled.
This little star burned out, far before it saw our solar system.
The tiger bit my heart straight through my cracked rib cage.
My parents aren't angry because they never knew
And that plus sign was a damned liar
Either that, or a negative number

Written to make me wonder , why did I let my hopes soar up to the heavens ,
Just to leave her little star up in the sky,
And my feet back here on earth?

Because she is a brand new constellation

And a brick is all I'm worth ...

All in all, just another brick in the wall
Because I wasn't ever falling
I was never a shooting star
I should never have let my hopes climb too high
Because what goes up must come back down
And incinerate on the very contact with the atmosphere
Here, where all is clear and cold cut.

And there are no exceptions.