

Rise

By Christine Bissonnette

There was a song

I grew up hearing a lot as a kid.

It was by the Rankin Family, and the chorus began with the conviction:

'we'll rise again.'

We'll rise again! My mom would sing that song repetitively as she ripped

the wall paper off

the walls of our

two bedroom apartment.

'We'

were three

young kids and her.

I was just old enough to wet the beige

under-layer of the paper and peel it away —

so intensely satisfying to tuck

my fingers behind a really good sliver

and p - u - l - l,

watching what was unwanted expand along the wall,

and eventually fall off in one solid piece;

bigger than my wingspan.

—

Now,

when I say

Rise

I don't necessarily mean High Rise, reaching for the sky, be
the mightiest of them all.

I also mean

the early morning;

when hopefully

it's quiet

except for the tap, tap, tap of your

sturdy feet

lingering on the ground.

...

as an adult,

I became obsessed with sound;

wanting all of my walls to come tumbling down,

I started teaching myself how to speak

beautifully. Not a crack.

I'd record my voice; play it back, dissect the notes for

even a shimmer of weakness.

In my late 20s, when I'd eventually arrived at that place we like to call

'rock bottom'

I considered this idea of RISING with a type of

pessimistic hope. the words felt so hollow;

impossible to believe that things could ever be any

different.

So I pretended, for a moment, to be fictional.

Imagine so hard it was unreasonable.

I whisked those impossible words together, and let them melt on my tongue.

Sweet... so I attempted to speak them. Softly. Poured them into the air.

'I will rise'

One step at a time.

But the next day, I found that I was able to get out of bed.

In order to RISE to the occasion,

Rise and shine

Rise up!

Rise and thrive

we have to first find

the sun;

which doesn't just rise once, but again, and again:

its' ritual spilling into the pause of our lingering feet,

tap, tap, tapping their morning beat

into the silence of a new day.

The privilege of being able to say the word 'again'

is immense, and doesn't mean you're not afraid;

bravery is knowing that regardless of what came before

'you' and everything you are

is worth fighting for;

again and again,

we open up that bedroom door and begin to settle in to our childhood whims of magic.

Synchronicity. The right opportunity crossing your path

and your head held just high enough to notice.

No, we don't rise alone.

Of course we don't.

We rise together

supporting each others mis-steps, detours, mis-directions; recalibrating our routes.

as we find our own personal sense of truth.

Soothing our imaginations with belief.

Now, when I say

rise

I don't necessarily mean High Rise, reaching for the sky, being

the mightiest of them all.

What I really mean is vulnerability.

The strength of your community.

Of being caught and catching

as we settle deeper and deeper

into our collaborative

empowered

new found

reality.