

Rewriting the Script

By Tammy Smith

Read my lips. Slightly parted,
split by a scream, tucked
behind the hard edge of silence.
Trace the felt-lined tip of tongue-tied rage.
Share my shame, sticking to the bottom of a script
I'm rewriting
humanity's fall from grace
using cliff notes.
Watch me (live or remote)
sing and dance and play games like Scrabble or chess
with cymbal-banging monkeys
in the middle of a drum circle,
waving a scarf like a wand or a flag,
surrendering to the chaos,
shaking my Magic 8-Ball, seeking answers to hazy,
try again later, but don't get lazy types of questions
I should keep to myself.

Watch me draw portraits of stick figures
in glass houses with white picket fences
past their vanishing points,
blurring the background
outside the margin of error.
I should recycle more
resources instead of wasting my talents
trying to tell time from a melting clock.
Watch me run
from the pressure to win
means to stop waging wars
against mirrors on pink princess walls.
Stepping off the unfairest scale in the land
shouldn't feel this heavy.

Watch me ask my therapist
why I chase perfection
like it's an algorithm
I need to feel safe
because I can't stretch my arms far enough
across a yoga mat to rest in a child's pose.
At least not yet, but even I know relaxing takes practice.