

P4P Poem 2023

I come from:

Playing outside on the hot concrete barefoot, government cheese, caged birds singing
Streetlights, smell of the rain, stale smoke and alcohol, back seats and bars
The smell of the ocean and river, owls, the voice of my dad
Cards in bicycle spokes, seagulls, yelling, children playing.

I come from:

Stop crying –it’s not that bad, shit’s gonna hit the fan, kill one the rest will learn
Children are seen not heard, Ill give you something to cry about, wait until your dad gets home
Life’s not fair and then you die, go pick a switch, don’t use that tone of voice with me
It didn’t grow legs and walk away, want in one hand and shit in the other – see which one fills up faster
Get to your room, you don’t need a man.

I come from:

Naive abused women, strong grandmas, addicts
“Self-made” women, teachers,
Mentors, addicted fathers

Today, I am a living example of:

Waking up next to my son, reflection time in nature, the peace in my recovery
Salvation, being alive, my sobriety, second chances to parent
My needs being met, career, family.

Today, I am a living example of:

Birthday dinners, laughing together, making memories, trips to the beach
Having fun playing games, camping, listening to our children laugh,
Sharing meals, group events, taking lots of pictures.

Today, I am a living example of:

Healing is possible, everyone deserves a second chance, the power of hope
People change, hope for the future, patience, empowerment,
How to be a friend, how to meet others where they are at, communication
Resiliency, forgiveness for myself, The Value of Parent Allies, I am not alone.

**We are the collective wisdom in action of
“Supporting parents in the child welfare system”
WE ARE THE FAMILIES WHO ARE STRONGER TOGETHER**