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poem

Mrs Nicely Nice

Kate Evans

Everything is always really
Nicely nice, in her life,
Lived on the edge of breakdown.

Not for her the cut and thrust of therapy,
Stripping the soul bare,
Re-building on rock.

Not for her work and rest,
The measured pace of days and nights,
The brilliant changes of the seasons. No.

Hers is a constant ferreting
Along the edge of the unendurable
Like a terrified fieldmouse,
The contagion of panic in her breast,
Running here, there,
Attempting to staunch the seepage of agony,
Stem each new treacherous leak,
Sandbag the river of her past against flood –

That past whose existence she constantly denies,
As it devastates her days, her weeks, her years. No, no,
She is not disturbed,
There is nothing wrong, of course
She's fine – can't you see?
That everything, really,
Is so nicely nice.

Kate Evans's poems are from *Journey into Healing*, published by Survivors' Poetry in 2006 as part of Survivors' Poetry Mentoring Pamphlet Series. She was mentored by Dave Russell. Another of her poems, *On Magritte's Healing*, will be published in a subsequent issue of the *Journal*.

Chosen by Femi Oyeboode.

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