

# **A Demon Lives Inside Of Me**

**Mike Finley**

**“WE STRIVE  
IN A WORLD  
WE CANNOT  
CONTROL”**

## **A Demon Lives Inside Of Me ...**

By a woodstove DEEP inside my ear ...`

A demon the size of a tonail, I guess --  
But a fully functioning demon nonetheless.

For years I had no notion he was there,  
until one day he woke me in my chair.

**"I am the demon Odorono," he said,  
"and for my own personal use and convenience  
I have confiscated your head."**

"But you have no right," I cried, blinking.

"I need this head to do my thinking!"

**"You think those thoughts are yours?"** he  
mocked.

**"They're just the smell from my unwashed  
socks."**

Then the demon tapped my eardrum with a stick,  
and filled my ear with crazy static.

The blast of a freighter piercing the fog.  
The clang of iron, bark of dog.

The screams of monkeys high in the canopy.

The grand finale fireworks explode,  
spray-painting my brain-pan, with silver and gold.

Then the demon grabbed my auditory nerve in  
both hands  
and he **chomped** on it  
and **chomped** on it  
and **chomped** on it again —



And I heard my hearing start to fade.  
Not the noise and tinnitus he made,  
but I could no longer hear any of you, sweet  
friends.

I saw you smacking your lips but making no sense.  
No communication, no coherence.

It was the saddest thing,  
Trying to connect but getting nothing.

Then I had my silent epiphany:

**“We strive in a world we cannot control.”**

and isn't that our glory, after all?

I chronicled this insight in a mighty poem,  
**“We strive in a world we cannot control.”**

If truth was a weapon, then here was my ball-peen hammer!

Luckily, The New Yorker Magazine suspended its customary high standards.

And mailed me a check for \$35.

I was the toast of East Coast scholars.

The issue was a hit and sold out in two days.  
I became famous by this critic's phrase:

“The unhearing poet who heard OUR cry.  
And wrote it down in a brave lullabye.”

My old professor from UCLA,  
who could never see his way to give me an A,  
Sought me out and shouted to me,  
**“Your work has made a giant leap,” said he,**  
**“You know who you are now, you have been set**  
**free.”**



But his approval fell on deaf ears.

I needed to confront the demon upstairs.

I knocked on my head,  
knowing it would jolt him out of bed.

There is a new sheriff now enforcing a brand new  
rule:

**“We Strive in a World We Cannot Control!!”**

So why not hit the road, a-hole?“

The demon leaped from his nightstand,  
a tiny green suitcase in one hand.  
Before he spread his wings to fly,  
I heard him say two words:  
“Bye” and “bye.”

That's right, I heard him say the words!  
I heard it with my own two ears!

So now my head is mine again.  
Demon free, till who knows when.

Best of all, now I am known as  
"The Poet Who Listens" --  
Thank you, dear friends, for your kind assistance !!

