

OCD Control

The Tree



There is a tree in my yard that drops berries without apology.

They stain the sidewalk, scatter unevenly, cling to the cracks.

Each morning they greet me like a challenge I didn't ask for, a mess that feels louder than it should.

I clean them up.

Again and again.

My hands know the ritual. Sweep. Scrape. Rinse. Repeat.

When the sidewalk is clear, something inside me settles.

Order returns.

The storm quiets.

For a moment, I am in control.

This is what OCD brings me.

It brings peace—the kind that whispers all is well once everything is in its place.

It brings order when my mind feels unruly.

It feels like a superpower, one that lets me accomplish something tangible when everything else feels overwhelming.

I can do this right.

I can fix this.

I can make it clean.

The berries are small, but the relief is enormous.

They pull me out of a slump and give me motion, purpose, proof.

The sidewalk becomes a promise: if I work hard enough, the chaos can be managed.

But the tree keeps dropping berries.

No matter how many times I clean, the cycle continues.

And recently, I've started cutting the tree down.

Branch by branch.

Each cut feels like a release—and a loss.

There is relief in removing the source.

And there is dismay in letting go of something that once made me feel capable, safe, accomplished.

Because the tree wasn't only a problem—it was also how I survived the mess.

OCD has been both my broom and my burden.

It has stilled my mind and exhausted my body.

It has given me control and taken my peace.

Changing the tree doesn't mean erasing what it gave me.

It means learning that I don't have to earn calm through constant cleaning.

That the sidewalk doesn't define my worth.

That even with a few berries left behind, I am still okay.

The tree is changing.

And so am I.