

## Toilet Rolls and Himalayan Rock Salt

Real life is not a fairy tale.

Tell me about it.

I'll wager my life savings that Cinderella didn't worry about there being enough toilet rolls to last the weekend or whether the salt grinder needed filling. Himalayan Rock Salt. The pink stuff.

As far as fairy tale princesses go, Cinderella had a difficult backstory. I'll give her that. Not only did she lose her parents, but she had to contend with her wicked stepmother and two ugly step-sisters ordering her around all the time.

'Cinderella! Bring me my tea!' 'Cinderella! Where's my favourite corset?!' 'Cinderella! Come clip my toenails!'

*Bossy wench.*

Come to think of it, it sounds a lot like my life. Like Cinderella, I, too, am up at first light, scrubbing, cooking, and doing everyone's bidding. Every. Bloody. Day.

'Babes, will you bring me a fresh towel?' 'Mum, where are my high-tops?!' 'Mum, I've got a back pimple. Come pop it for me!'

You see? Similarities.

I know what you're thinking. 'But poor Cinderella wasn't allowed to go to the ball!'

*Boo hoo, I say. Get over it.*

Honestly? I don't understand why she carried on grumbling the way she did.

'Woe is me! I shall have to sit at home with no one but my animal friends to keep me company.'

I should be so lucky to have a night in all to myself. The opportunity to zone out and watch what I want to watch on the telly? Yes, please. A few blissful hours of cognitive tranquility would be a welcome change.

The dog, by the way, can stay.

Allow me to spell out how Cinderella's fairy tale circumstances differ from mine.

Mental load, that's how.

The mostly unrecognised, generally unappreciated worry work involved in managing a modern-day household. It's not about the actual physical labour—any ding-dong can separate the whites from the darks, change a lightbulb, or pick up milk (the one with the green cap) from the shops. It's more about being the person solely responsible for overseeing those mundane but necessary tasks. Remembering what needs to get done where and when. Delegating jobs, but also having to make sure they actually get done because, you know, they seldom do without three or more reminders. I wake up every morning with a never-ending list of to-do items running through my mind on an infinite loop. It's exhausting.

Cinderella didn't suffer mental load. She simply followed orders. If anything, it was her wicked stepmother who carried that thankless burden. It's her you should feel sorry for.

Not to be nasty, but I take great pleasure in knowing that Cinderella will get her comeuppance *after* her so-called happily ever after. She *thinks* she married Prince Charming, when what she actually settled for was just another mollycoddled mama's boy who's never run a Hoover. Once the royal brats arrive ... LOL. She, too, will get a taste of mental load and all the headaches that come with it.

Where's that story?