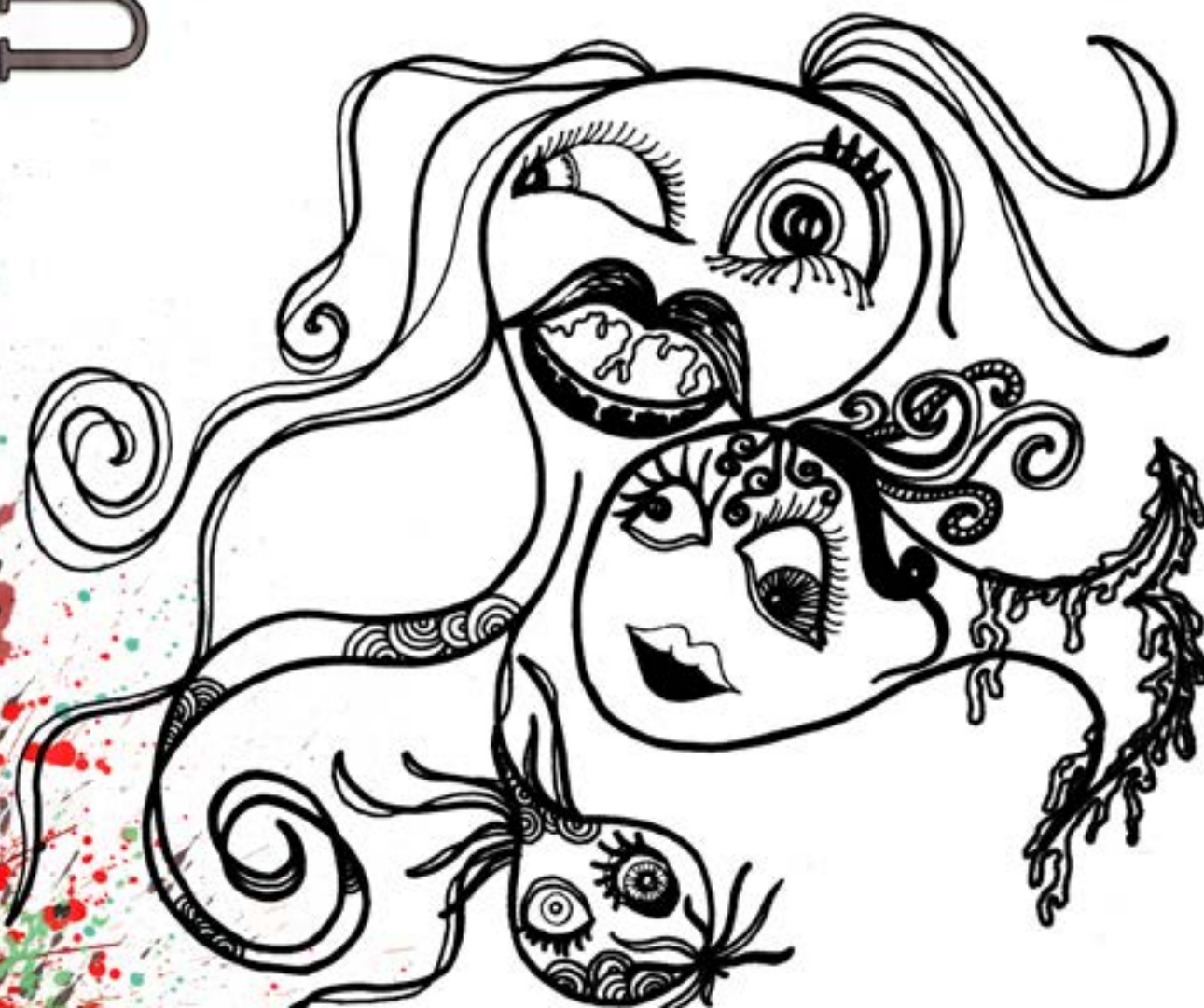


2014

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# 2014 Becoming US Legacy XIII



**FRONT COVER:**  
*Aquarium of the Ages*  
**Marianna Mello**

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## To the Reader

What a journey this has been! As the end of my first year at RACC draws to a close, I look around the campus and reflect on how I have grown, what I have learned, and the new friends I have made - young and old alike. Each of us have significant reasons of why we are attending college and the majors we have declared. We all are unique yet we all share commonalities. We are students of RACC.

Going through the process of developing this journal, I have been amazed and humbled by our student body - diversified and united, gifted and developed, connected and committed. Yes, there are challenges we face every day. If there were no challenges, there would not be any growth. Growth is what makes us who we are.

As you peruse through these pages, our hope is that you joyfully experience the growth of these very gifted students. They clearly define the true meaning of *Becoming Us*.

Jan Loose

The heavy snow covers the limbs and the earth is frozen. The bitter wind blows harshly as the cold penetrates into the roots sleeping beneath the frozen ground. Only the hardest of plants survive. There is beauty in this landscape. For many of us, though, it is a cold hard beauty—and we all look forward to this harsh gray winter giving way to the colors of spring.

The wind turns from a never-ending frosty torrent to a warm gentle breeze. The plants that have survived beneath the snow poke out from the frozen ground. The grass quickly thickens and the shoots from spring's flowers push their way through the thawing winter landscape.

In this edition of *Legacy* we share with you the works of many talented students. It seems creativity have kept them alive during the winter's wrath. They have pushed their way through the cold hard ground and toward the sun that will nourish their works. These new shoots have become us and we at *Legacy* present to you the beauty of *Becoming Us*.

J. David Roslin

## Acknowledgements

As the staff of *Legacy XIII* we express our greatest appreciation for the effort of all involved in this publication. We thank all the students who submitted their writing, art, and photography. Their contributions attest to the abilities, creativity, and potential of our college's student body. And it is to them that we owe our deepest gratitude.

We wholeheartedly thank our faculty advisor Dr. Bahar Diken. Without her direction and perseverance, our completion of this project could not have been accomplished. We also wish to acknowledge the help provided by our fellow students, Kristen Broussard, Irving Guzman, David J. Meyer, Janelle Zimmerman, Rafael Escobar, Jeffrey Flores, and Edgar Tafolla. Thank you for your support, feedback, and friendship.

We offer our sincere appreciation to the faculty whose mentorship helped make *Becoming Us* possible. Thank you for encouraging us to imagine, create, and share. We are grateful for the continued support of RACC's administration and extend our thanks to Sue Gelsinger, Coordinator of Student Activities, for her assistance. In particular, we express our gratitude to Dr. Anna Weitz, President of our college, for her leadership in fostering an environment of learning in which excellence is achieved.

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## Conduits of Mourning

Catherine J. Mahony

My mind began to slow down, as the crickets outside my window chirped in harmony with my father's radio but just as I was actually about to fall asleep, I was catapulted from the brink of my long awaited slumber by a sonic boom. The sound came through the crack of my window like an aftershock that had been lurking just below the surface ever since a fault line ran through the center of my family—opening up, swallowing us whole that past December. The eruption came in waves between the pleasant, consistent voice of the baseball announcer whose monotonous tone lulled me to sleep each night, with sweet serenades of “the count is full” and “the bases are loaded.” At first I was frozen with fear, afraid of what I might find if I pried myself from my bed to investigate.

I sprang from my bed, fitted with childhood printed sheets, to see what horrendous noise had awakened me. In my pajamas, I proceeded through the house in pursuit of the noise. I

began tripping over *Teen Beat* magazines and remnants of my mother—a beautiful card she had given me, thanking me for her last birthday gift, telling me I was *the wind beneath her wings* (a line from her favorite song) and some of her clothing and trinkets which were still strewn about carelessly, blanketing the floor—painful reminders of her absence.

I followed the empty beer cans, forming a reversed Hansel and Gretel trail, leading me farther and farther from home. I then paused for a moment in the doorway of my parents' bedroom and stared once again at the huge bronze crucifix that hung over their bed. In front of that cross is where I knelt and pleaded with God the night the ambulance took my mother away. I cursed that same God when I found out she had died. Those devastating words my father spoke to me only a few months before still echoed in my head every time I closed my eyes and tried to sleep, like a nightmare I never fully awoke from. Up until that moment

I never had any personal experience with death. I could not really explain what happened when someone died but what I could explain was the void inside my chest that could not be filled. What I did understand were the things that no longer existed because of death: no more late night talks at the kitchen table as Kool Filter King smoke encircled my head, no more bitter sweet perfume lingering in the bathroom, and no more home cooked meals.

I had not slept through the night in months, my mind constantly being tormented by the unknown. I had overheard my father talking with my mother's doctor, saying how her eyes, her beautiful hazel eyes, were the only things worth donating to science. Then once again, through a partially cracked door I heard the funeral director tell my father that she did not look very good, so the casket should be closed for the services. I remember thinking, “Who looks good when they're dead anyway?” I should have looked. I should have at least knelt down on that old rickety bench and said a prayer for her. I wanted to pry myself off that seat in the back of the funeral home, run to the casket, and throw the lid open just to see my mother one last time. But instead, I was motionless with the thought of what was inside that silver framed box, as I recalled my father telling me that it was for the best that I remembered mom the way she *was*. His words made me even more curious. What was everyone trying

to protect me from? Did this Pandora's Box of a coffin conceal a version of my mother that upon seeing would have changed me forever?

I wondered if she even looked like my mother anymore. Had they replaced her eyes with marbles or did they just leave her sockets empty and hollow like my chest was? Was her skin as grey and decayed as those zombies in the *Thriller* video? So many unanswered questions hung heavy in the air.

Caught in a moment of indecision, second guessing whether or not I should investigate the noise, I sat on my mother's bed. My parents had two single beds pushed together for as long as I could remember, convenient for quick separation on the nights I was sent to my room and told to turn up the radio, which never really drowned out the screaming anyway. Sometimes bits and pieces of the heated conversations would drift under my bedroom door. At times I could even decode fragments of the arguments that were filtered through the thick glass pressed to my ear, the conduit for things I was not supposed to hear such as “I will not cover for you anymore!” and “Act like a father for once!”

I then lied back on the bed and acted out the scene I had been performing every night since my mother died. I would lie there perfectly still as I extinguished my last breath, being as melodramatic as possible just like I had seen the actors do a hundred times on

my mother's soap operas. I could almost hear my mother's voice inside of my head: "No one ever looks that good when they're dead. Look at her make-up and hair. It looks like she just stepped out of the salon." I then tensed up all of my muscles at once and in one furious jolt I threw myself back hard, pretending to be dead.

Then, like a gentle nudging from the grave, I was prodded to discover what had startled me, compelling me to leave the comfort of my bed in the first place. The continuing trail led me to the threshold of the car port. I cautiously opened the creaking silver-framed screen door –my father's get away from this sobering world. The electronic time machine that transported my father to a simpler era, the soothing companion which once wailed with the sounds of the good old days, giving my dad the words he could not find to speak of the emotional turmoil he was experiencing, now strewn across the pavement. Innards composed of plastic loose wires and sharp coils once the conduits of my parents' wedding song were nothing of themselves. This sporadic and random arrangement of dysfunctional parts, assembled to work together in unison, were now useless without the adhering encasement whose sole purpose was to stabilize the component, allowing it to function properly. I silently witnessed the souls of invisible melodies float from the plastic corpse and drift up through the air.

I slowly began to descend the cement steps. Cans littered the ground, creating a shiny graveyard filled with crushed hopes and regrets. Through the static and faint electric glow of black and white streaming lines (the only light provided in the dark of the night) I saw a heap under the table. From the deafening silence I heard the quiet mumblings of a Frank Sinatra tribute, laced with pungent streams of whiskey breath.

"And now the end is near and so I face the final curtain. I've lived a life that's full (hiccup), regrets I've had a few but then again too few to mention. I did what I had to do and did it my way. Hun bun come (hiccup) come here to daddy. What is a man—what has he got, If not himself than he has not?"

My father's tone began to rise in an inebriated crescendo as he struggled to move: "I did it my way!"

"Dad, what happened? Are you alright?"

Tears began to invade my eyes at the thought of losing my father too. He then pressed fast forward on his intoxicated cerebral cassette players, now dispersed in dysfunctional parts on the floor.

"My love waits there in San Francisco, above the moon and windy sea. When I come home to you, San Francisco, your golden sun will shine for me. Who can I turn to when nobody needs me, with no star to guide me and no one beside me? Who can I turn to, if you turn away?"

"Dad, please get up!"

I am not sure if he heard my words as his sweet blue eyes rolled haphazardly in the back of his head and he passed out. I am not sure how long the soundtrack of my father's life that played in his head went on for, as I am sure it was set to repeat since the day my mother died, like a mute memorial giving her life once again but I knew I had to try and clean up this mess before the neighbors saw.

It seemed as if the kids on my block were not allowed to play in my yard since my dad turned to his liquid form of mourning. Being the daughter of an alcoholic I learned how to keep the secrets that festered in our house like an incurable and ravaging disease of hopelessness.

I quickly formulated the only plan I could at the time. I had to somehow pick up my father and get him up the three stairs which seemed like a trek up Mount Everest to my frail thirteen-year-old legs and put him to bed. So I bent down and tried to drape his lifeless soul over my shoulders but he was dead weight. As I tried to shake him he just kept rambling: "My Katie, why my Katie? It should have been me. I cannot do this."

Through a veil of tears I draped his limp arm around my thin frame and, with all the

strength I could muster, I began to slowly pick my father off the ground. I imagined that I was strong enough to raise him from the dark abyss he had been engulfed in. I imagined that, along with the 210 lbs of broken man I was lifting, I could lift my mother from the grave, bringing her back to reassemble our shattered component that once was our loving family, intact and one whole unit. As I dragged him through the carcasses of wires, coils, and deceased

I imagined that, along with the 210 lbs of broken man I was lifting, I could lift my mother from the grave, bringing her back to reassemble our shattered component that once was our loving family, intact and one whole unit

melodic memories, his weight began to overtake me. I was about to give up when my father began to weep uncontrollably. I let his tears carry us the rest of the way like a grief filled tidal wave. I gained strength with each step, knowing I was the only

thing between him and another painful fall.

I dragged him up each step until finally we made it to the top. He began to regain some balance as beads of exasperation pooled in the folds of my adolescent expression. I suddenly felt the weight of his sorrow around my neck strangling my will and killing my hope of ever having my father back. I walked him to his recliner and he slumped over in a pitiful hump.

As I watched him in his chair, I remembered a time when his old blue eyes twinkled, a time when he and my mother would dance the

waltz in and out of every room, as he sang to her. They were Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in that perfect moment. I raised my tired eyes and fixed them on the wall where my parents' wedding picture hung, crooked and strangled by cobwebs. In the forced silence I stared into my mother's hazel eyes, recognizing the elation they possessed on a day. Then I scanned the darkened room and noticed another picture on their 25th anniversary and those same beautiful eyes were dull, no longer sparkling with joy. The memory of my mother's voice once again penetrated my thoughts: "Honey one day you will understand what it means to truly love someone, through the good and the bad."

The next morning the phone rang loudly, penetrating my father's hangover and jolting me out of a deep sleep, one that I did not reach until 4am. I answered it hesitantly, as I was supposed to be in school and I was fearful that it was them on the other end.

"Hello."

"Hi Honey, is your father there? He was supposed to be at work already."

As if my mouth was on auto pilot I blurted out what I knew I was supposed to say like a trained parrot.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Johnson, but my dad has the flu and he will not be coming in to work today. I will let him know that you called though."

"Oh, okay no problem. I hope he feels better then. Have a good day sweetie."

I hung up the phone and in the background I could hear that thick glass fall from the wall and shatter into a thousand shards. A new kind of encasement was forming out of those fragile shards in my mind, assembling a thin membrane around my heart that would grow thicker over time, like a callus I never asked for. I *was* now my mother. Maybe it was for the best that I never did look inside that coffin.

**FACING PAGE:**  
*Universal of Language*  
Alexandra Terrell



## I Have a Dream

*Anthony Tunnell*

I believe in peace, equality and support. A place of love and free-spirit from human beings.

Having beliefs in others, being able to love anyone regardless of their gender or color of their skin.

Ability to see Blacks, Whites, Latinos and Asians joining hands and as one nation instead of as enemies.

View the world in a better understanding, letting our emotions not control us or hurt the ones we love.

Everyone laughing and smiling, leading a hand when all seems lost to embrace the power of love.

Anyone can picture this dream, but only the strong can believe this will happen someday.

Determined to see the next generation of kids not gangbanging or selling drugs, but see them going to college and leading a prime example to their brothers and sisters.

Reality we live in false words and ideals, but we can make these words a reality instead of a dream.

Equal opportunity for Whites, Blacks, Latinos and Asians. No matter the beliefs or gender we will love one another as brothers and sisters.

Appreciate and show respect to those who die before you and those who fought to see you make it in this world today.

Missions can be achieved, so let this be our mission, let this be an idea and a goal. Someday we can all look back on this, and we can say “we made this happen”

**I Have a Dream**



## Understanding Deaf Psychosis

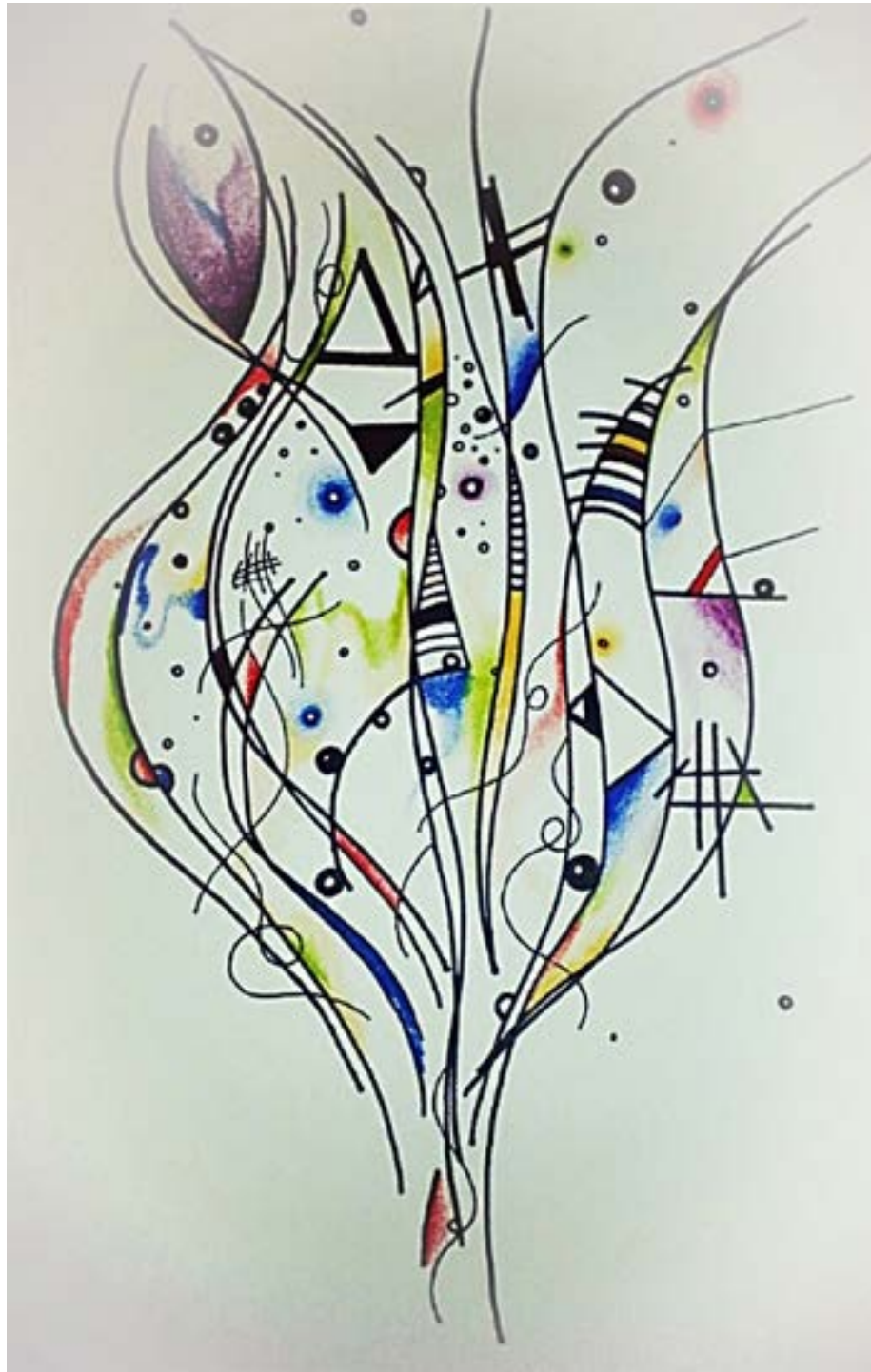
*Rachel Lee*

Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing constitute a unique group that the psychological and psychiatric field has historically ignored (Landsberger & Diaz, 2010). Although there has been an increase of research into the mental states of psychiatric inpatients who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, the psychological field still lacks an adequate knowledge base concerning mental illnesses in deaf individuals. When considered in light of the fact that all literature has pointed to evidence that the incidence of psychiatric illness has remained the same regardless of a person’s hearing status (Haskins, 2004; Landsberger & Diaz, 2010; Vernon & Daigle-King, 1999), a grim portrait is painted: Mental health professionals have had only a vague idea of how to adequately assess and treat the deaf population and, as a result, the many deaf individuals who suffer from mental illnesses have lived their lives untreated. In order to help these individuals, the psychiatric field must expand its comprehension concerning the manifestation and treatment of mental illnesses in deaf individuals.

In alignment with this concern, the researcher elected to thoroughly examine the prevalence and symptomology of one of the most debilitating and persistent psychiatric disorders, schizophrenia. The expectation is that this paper will serve as a framework for research that would aid in the creation and refinement of a model for the understanding and treatment of schizophrenia in deaf individuals. Furthermore, the researcher hopes that this paper will encourage others to construct theoretical models for other psychiatric illnesses afflicting the deaf and hard-of-hearing population in order to guide and promote culturally sensitive treatment methods.

### **Defining the Term Deaf**

The term *deaf* has assumed a variety of meanings within both English and American Sign Language (ASL). In the English vernacular, the term *deaf* has referred to individuals who have retained a wide range of hearing sensitivity, including bilateral profound deafness, unilateral deafness, and the ability to hear some sounds in each ear. Similarly, in ASL,



*Blossom of Life*  
Marianna Mello

the term *deaf* has referred to individuals with a myriad of hearing sensitivities, but unlike English, use of the term in ASL has highlighted cultural differences.

In ASL, the capitalization of the term *deaf* has denoted whether or not an individual has both utilized ASL and engaged in a flourishing *Deaf* (with an uppercase *d*) culture—one with its own schools, traditions, and norms. In alignment with such usage of the term, individuals have referred to themselves as culturally *Deaf* despite their level of audiological sensitivity as long as they have been fluent in ASL and have lived immersed in Deaf culture (Moore & Levitan, 2007, p. 310). On the other hand, individuals with severe deafness who have relied on lip-reading and vocalizing have often referred to themselves as *oral-deaf* or *culturally hard-of-hearing*. The ASL community has not labeled such individuals as *Deaf* because these individuals have not embraced the *Deaf* language and culture (pp. 310-317). The ASL community further distinguishes other individuals who have possessed varying amounts of audiological deafness and who have not been fluent in any language by simply referring to them as *deaf*. For simplicity's sake, in this research, the term *deaf* refers to all individuals with audiological deafness, regardless of cultural affiliation.

It is important, however, for mental health professionals to understand the terminology

outlined above. In keeping with the American Psychological Association's (2002) ethical principle of justice, professionals also need to comprehend that deaf Americans constitute a highly eclectic group that represents all nationalities, religions, languages, educational levels, and audiological sensitivities. Comprehension of the variability among deaf Americans is critical to professionals in the mental health fields because these factors all have contributed to the manifestation, assessment, and treatment of the various psychological disorders that occur in the deaf population.

For instance, individuals who became deaf prior to formal language acquisition may not have had a strong grasp of any language if their parents did not ensure that they were exposed to signed language at an early age. Without at least an elementary-level comprehension of any language, a large amount of knowledge—both through formal and informal education—will be unavailable to these individuals. Attempting to communicate with, diagnose, and treat those without more than an elementary-level comprehension of a language and very little education has presented enormous challenges, as has diagnosing and treating individuals who may be fluent in ASL, but who have still possessed different cultural values and diverse life experiences.



### Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders Among Deaf Individuals

Because so few professionals in the past and present have been equipped to accurately assess and treat deaf individuals, there has been a paucity of psychological literature regarding the prevalence, manifestation, and treatment of mental illness in individuals who are deaf. Between 1929 and 1999, researchers conducted only ten studies with the purpose of describing the population of psychiatric inpatients who happened to be deaf. Vernon and Daigle-King (1999) presented a thorough review of these ten studies. Their literature review illuminated how the reported prevalence of schizophrenia among inpatients has decreased at the same time that the rate of psychotic disorder not otherwise specified (NOS) has grown. While researchers must be cognizant of the limited generalizability of the estimates reported in each study, the overall pattern has revealed how diagnosis of unidentifiable cases has changed throughout time.

The recorded change in the rate of schizophrenia over time most likely occurred because, historically, psychiatrists utilized schizophrenia as “catch-all” diagnosis when

language barriers, educational deficiencies, and cultural differences complicated assessment (Landsberger & Diaz, 2010; Vernon & Daigle-King, 1999). Today, as the body of knowledge regarding Deaf culture has begun to grow, research has indicated more similar rates of schizophrenia for both the deaf and hearing inpatient populations (Landsberger & Diaz, 2010). These estimates have currently hovered around only 20% (Haskins, 2004; Landsberger & Diaz, 2010) as compared to earlier decades,

Part of the change in the estimated prevalence of schizophrenia has most certainly occurred as a result of the increase in the understanding of Deaf culture and language, which has aided overcoming some barriers that complicated diagnosis.

when research projected that schizophrenia’s prevalence among deaf inpatients was about 50% (as cited in Vernon & Daigle-King, 1999). Part of the change in the estimated prevalence of schizophrenia has most certainly occurred as a result of the increase in the understanding of Deaf culture and language, which has aided overcoming some barriers that complicated diagnosis. Increased knowledge, however, cannot account for all of this change. Even today, clinicians still give ambiguous diagnoses as a result of the general lack of knowledge concerning mental illnesses in deaf individuals. Thus, it has appeared that instead of using schizophrenia for difficult diagnoses, unidentifiable cases have tended to receive

a label of psychosis NOS, the current rates of which Landsberger and Diaz (2010) reported to hover around 38%.

Overall, while knowledge of ASL and Deaf culture has increased, diagnostic patterns have begun shifting to better reflect the true prevalence of schizophrenia and other disorders among the deaf population. The psychiatric community must remember, however, that because there has been a general lack of research in regards to the mental health of individuals who happened to be deaf, as Landsberger and Diaz (2010) emphasized, “recent and reliable estimates of the number of deaf and hard-of-hearing people with psychiatric problems are [still] currently unavailable” (p. 196).

### Manifestation of Schizophrenia in Deaf Individuals

A general lack of research has limited not only knowledge concerning the prevalence of schizophrenia among deaf psychiatric inpatients, but also knowledge concerning the manifestation of schizophrenia in deaf individuals. Although a few studies over the past sixty years attempted to identify the exact symptomology of schizophrenia in individuals who happened to be deaf, the studies’ relatively small sample sizes have made generalizing results difficult. In reviewing two of the most thorough studies, however, one can draw some general conclusions. Specifically, in examining the research of Evans and

Elliot (1981), and Horton and Silverstein (2011a), it became obvious that four symptom clusters—problems with affect, disorientation, hallucinations, and motor or volition problems—have been strong indicators of schizophrenia in individuals who are deaf.

In 1981, Evans and Elliott conducted one of the earliest studies into the symptomology of schizophrenia in deaf individuals. Through their study of thirteen severely and profoundly deaf individuals, Evans and Elliott found the following symptoms of schizophrenia most common in their sample: loss of ego boundaries, delusions, illogical or abnormal explanations, hallucinations, removal from reality, inappropriate or restricted affect, and ambivalence (p.787). They further asserted that these six symptoms were unique to deaf individuals with schizophrenia; they were not common traits within the Deaf culture. On the other hand, Evans and Elliott (1981) found certain characteristics—such as poor insight, lability of affect, poverty of content in communication, poor rapport, vagueness, and inability to complete actions—to be common among both non-psychiatric deaf individuals and among deaf individuals with schizophrenia. Because Evans and Elliott’s *secondary symptoms* occurred without the presence of schizophrenia, clinicians should not formulate a diagnosis based on the presence of these alone.



*Lil Hand*

Rafael Nuñez

Thirty years later, Horton and Silverstein (2011a) expanded upon Evans and Elliott's original work. Over a period of two years, Horton and Silverstein examined the manifestation of schizophrenia in thirty-four prelingually and profoundly deaf individuals. During the same time period in which they investigated symptomology, Horton and Silverstein also tested and controlled for confounding factors, including linguistic abilities, cognition, social cognition, and functionality. In addition, they chose to assess a matched hearing group (the control sample) of thirty-one individuals, who were also diagnosed with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder.

Horton and Silverstein's (2011a) study identified five primary symptom clusters for their two samples. The clusters, which were drawn from the symptoms listed in the 24-Item Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale, included disorganization, anergia or negative symptoms, thought disorder and delusions, affective disturbances, and activity-related symptoms. Their analysis revealed that all individuals in both the main and control samples obtained high scores on two or more of the identified clusters. Furthermore, Horton and Silverstein found that the control sample of hearing individuals tended to score highest on the affect and the disorganization clusters whereas the main sample of deaf individuals tended to score highest on disorganization, anergia, and

activity clusters.

In Horton and Silverstein's (2011a) study, individuals who happened to be deaf scored equally high or higher on the disorganized symptomology cluster as the control counterparts did. Increased linguistic ability correlated with a decrease in disorganized symptoms for deaf individuals and, in light of this evidence, Horton and Silverstein proposed that the high level of disorganized symptoms among the deaf population may have had more to do with linguistic ability than with actual manifestation of schizophrenia. Supporting this hypothesis, Horton and Silverstein's study further revealed that disorganization symptomology correlated significantly with functional outcome, cognitive, and social cognitive results for the control sample of hearing individuals, but not for the main sample. Despite the possibly confounding variable of linguistic ability, Horton and Silverstein's study provided evidence that disorganization could be a hallmark symptom of schizophrenia in individuals who are deaf.

In addition to having provided an in-depth examination of the manifestation of disorganized symptoms in individuals who happened to be deaf, Horton and Silverstein's (2011a) study also illuminated several critical differences between the main sample of deaf individuals living with schizophrenia and the control sample of hearing individuals

diagnosed with schizophrenia. Chief among the critical differences Horton and Silverstein identified was the finding that attentiveness was a marker symptom of schizophrenia among the hearing population but not among the deaf population. Horton and Silverstein's analysis also revealed that although anergia and activity were symptom clusters that had a close correlation with outcome measures for the main sample of deaf individuals, they were not significant clusters for the control sample.

Conclusively, Horton and Silverstein (2011a) claimed that differences most definitely do exist between the manifestation of schizophrenia in the control sample of hearing individuals and the manifestation of schizophrenia in the main sample. They also believed that this finding would hold true when generalized. Similarly, Evans and Elliott (1981) found that the criteria utilized to identify schizophrenia in hearing individuals were not entirely accurate when applied to individuals who were deaf.

The combined results of Evans and Elliott's (1981) study and Horton and Silverstein's (2011a) study have shed light on what a theoretical model of schizophrenia for deaf individuals might include. Namely, the symptoms that both studies recorded in common—problems with affect, disorientation presented by loss of ego boundaries and delusions, hallucinations, and motor or volition problems—form the

basis for a rough theoretical model. In addition to the empirical evidence that schizophrenic symptomology has differed between the hearing and the deaf populations, several other papers focused on defining how certain schizophrenic symptoms may manifest in deaf individuals.

#### **Focused Research into the Manifestation of Thought Disorder**

Horton and Silverstein's (2011a) research showed that the symptom cluster of thought disorder was not significantly correlated to functional outcome or other variables associated with Schizophrenia for the main sample of individuals who happened to be deaf. As such, thought disorder cannot be concluded to be an accurate indicator of schizophrenia among the deaf population. Believing that the low correlation regarding thought disorder was related to verbal assessments, Horton and Silverstein (2011b) investigated the issue again. Testing the same samples as in their previous study, Horton and Silverstein (2011b) used the Ebbinghaus illusion (a nonverbal test) to assess whether schizophrenia affected perceptual-whole processing, which constitutes part of a person's organized thinking.

In the end, Horton and Silverstein's (2011b) experiment verified their past results. When analyzing and comparing the scores of deaf

and hearing individuals with schizophrenia, Horton and Silverstein discovered that the deaf individuals demonstrated better perceptual-whole processing than their hearing counterparts. Their results held true even when they only considered the scores of deaf and hearing subjects who presented disorganized. Yet not all deaf individuals retained perfect perceptual-whole processing: The deaf individuals who presented disorganized symptoms were less likely to utilize perceptual-whole processing than deaf individuals without disorganized symptomology (Horton & Silverstein, 2011b).

This pattern suggested, as Horton and Silverstein (2011b) pointed out, that the use of sign language in deaf individuals could result in stronger perceptual abilities prior to schizophrenia's onset. If this were true, then comparing outright Ebbinghaus illusion scores from hearing and deaf individuals could lead to misinterpretation. Because there were no control scores from a group of deaf individuals without psychiatric issues with which to compare the scores of deaf individuals who were diagnosed with schizophrenia, Horton and Silverstein's (2011b) findings were inconclusive. Whether thought disorder has been rare in the deaf population or not, however, it still has occurred. As such, more research into the manifestation of thought disorders in individuals who are deaf is necessary.

#### **Focused Research into the Manifestation of Hallucinations**

Although research indicated that thought disorder has been a rare symptom of schizophrenia for deaf individuals, symptoms such as delusions and hallucinations have been common among deaf individuals with schizophrenia (Evans & Elliott, 1981; Horton & Silverstein, 2011a). Due to linguistic and cultural barriers, however, there has been much debate concerning the true nature of hallucinations experienced by individuals who happened to be deaf. As such, one of the most researched questions in regards to bizarre symptomology in individuals who happened to be deaf has been whether or not deaf individuals can "hear voices."

Throughout the literature, various researchers assumed both sides of the auditory hallucination debate: some asserted that deaf individuals do hear voices while others stated that the phenomenon is impossible (Atkinson, 2006; Critchley, Denmark, Warren, & Wilson, 1981; Paijmans, Cromwell, & Austen, 2006). In a 2006 theory expansion, neuropsychologist Atkinson cited that, overall, a larger percent of deaf individuals than hearing individuals reported visual hallucinations and that about 50% of deaf individuals with schizophrenia claimed to have auditory hallucinations. Despite the overwhelming amount of reports of auditory hallucinations in deaf individuals,

skeptics have pointed out that linguistic and cultural barriers prevented accurate assessment of the true nature of hallucinations in deaf individuals (Paijmans, Cromwell & Austen, 2006).

Individuals who are deaf, and thus who have various experiences with sound, may have different conceptualizations of “hearing voices” than the majority of the hearing population (Paijmans, Cromwell & Austen, 2006; Atkinson, 2006). Furthermore, ASL and English are not easily translated from one to the other; that is, signs are not simply “English words acted out” (Landsberger & Diaz, 2010; McCay & Miller, 2001). In fact, no sign in ASL exists for the concept of hallucination (Glickman, 2007; McCay & Miller, 2001). Therefore, interpreters, especially those who lack sufficient training in mental health interpreting, have needed to attempt to explain the concept of auditory hallucinations to the clients (Glickman, 2007). When faced with a question that one did not understand and for which a person did not have a frame of reference, some deaf individuals may have simply given a vague affirmative answer in order to please the assessing professional (Glickman, 2007).

The significance of these linguistic and cultural barriers to accurately assessing whether or not a deaf individual with schizophrenia experiences auditory hallucinations led several individuals, including Glickman (2007), to

advise professionals to look for physical signs of hallucinations in addition to self-reports. Furthermore, as researchers Paijmans, Cromwell, and Austen (2006) emphasized, assisting an individual who feels distressed by an experience is more critical than identifying the true nature of hallucinations (p.47).

### Conclusions

Although the manifestation of schizophrenia in individuals who are deaf is similar in individuals with fully hearing capabilities, critical differences do exist. In order to develop a model specific to the symptomology of schizophrenia in deaf individuals, researchers will need to conduct more research with larger sample sizes. Furthermore, a starting block is essential. Based on past research, the researcher has proposed a rough theoretical model consisting of the following symptomology: (a) problems with displaying appropriate affect; (b) disorientation presented by a loss of ego boundaries and the presence of delusions (those unrelated to Deaf Culture); (c) distressing hallucinations (modality inconsequential); (d) negative symptoms and motor problems; and (e) a marked decrease in functional ability.

Improvements to this model and to the psychiatric field’s current knowledge base of the manifestation of other mental illnesses will be crucial to serving a large amount of people who have traditionally suffered due to

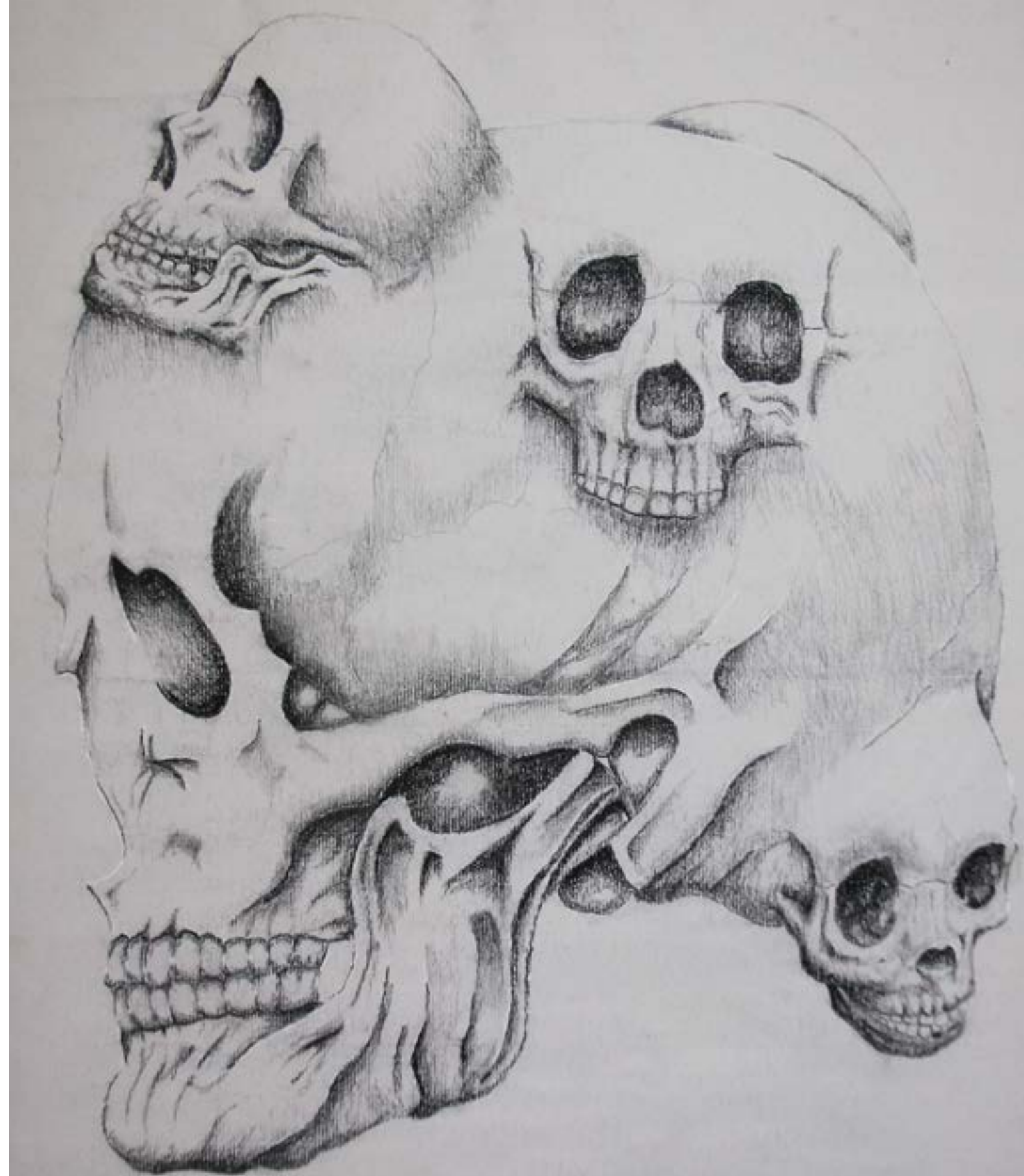
misdiagnoses and a lack of adequately trained professionals. Creating working theoretical models of symptomology, however, will be simply a small part of the necessary change. Research into effective diagnostic and treatment techniques for all individuals who are deaf—despite communication modality—will also be important. Change needs to come from within the entire psychiatric community as educating the mental health professionals in both Deaf culture and in ASL is critical to the provision of better care as well as the initiation of more research. The more the body of knowledge expands and theories develop, however, the better equipped the psychiatric community need to be not only to serve those who are deaf but also to serve the general population with new cross-cultural treatments and diagnostic techniques.

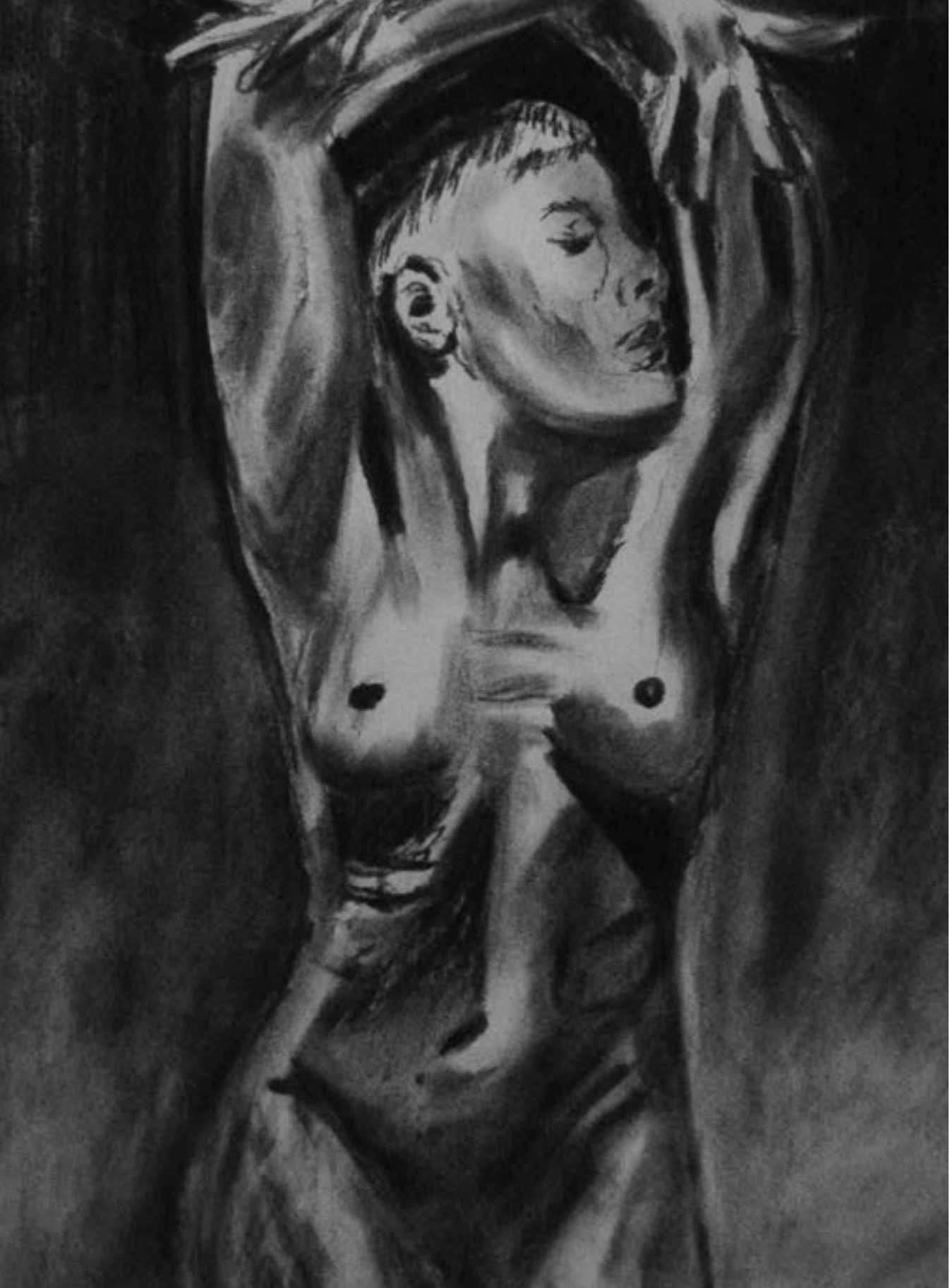
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**FACING PAGE:**  
*Voices*  
Jorge Quiros





*Confidence*  
Chrissie Studenroth

## **Fault Line**

*Catherine J. Mahony*

As I removed the tip from my pulsating vein,  
A drop of crimson filled the tissue like a toxic oil spill.  
I witnessed red life mingle with poison,  
White fibers tainted by liquid death.  
I rose, stumbling in a barren room.

My trembling fingers traced the enclosure, desperately trying to find a portal of escape.  
A faint rumbling emerged from beneath my feet,  
A hanging wall above me and footwall below,  
Miniscule fractures began forming fault lines;  
dusty, intersecting crevices intent on destruction.

Seismic waves washed over me, as I fumbled in the darkness.  
A single beam of light cascaded across my face,  
As I got up, struggling to secure my footing amidst fragmented plaster and slivers of glass.  
I gazed through the aperture, watching the sunrise illuminate my apocalyptic devastation.

As I removed the tip from my ink well,  
a drop of black pigment filled my paper like a benign oil spill.  
I witnessed ebony hope mingle with reinvention,  
White fibers enriched by liquid catharsis.

## Flesh and Blood

*Jan Loose*

I was raised in a loving home. My parents were “old-school” with good values. I was Daddy’s little tomboy and somewhat spoiled. My older brother did not seem to mind all the attention I would get. He was the first-born after all and always got what he wanted. My parents were self-employed hairdressers and had converted a part of the house into a beauty shop long before I was born. They loved showing me off to their customers, especially after my Dad gave me my first permanent at the age of four. They sure took a lot of pictures of me when I was a baby, and every single one of those black and white snapshots had a date on the back or as a caption—the classic “naked baby” pictures along with many other posed and candid shots of me being held or playing. We were the All-American family. I felt that life was good – not perfect but good.

It was not until I was a young girl that I was told by my parents that I was adopted at birth. I think I had a moment of confusion at first, but, in all the joys of life, the word “adopted” did not linger in my mind very long. What was

a big deal to me at the time was that everyone who knew me seemed to know I was adopted—except for newly-made acquaintances or strangers who would see our family together at the local department store or supermarket and always remark on how much I looked like my mother. Even the kids in school knew. I did not know how. Kids can be cruel sometimes. I knew they were talking about me...one leaning into the other with his hands cupped around her ears whispering loud enough so I could hear them: “Her real mom didn’t want her. There must be something wrong with her.” Then their eyes glared directly at me and they both snickered with devious delight. “Stupid kids! What do they know!” I thought to myself. “There’s nothing wrong with me. I have great parents.” I slowly walked away being careful not to show any reaction to what I heard and attempted to erase the banter from my memory.

By the time I reached high school, so many questions had emerged in my mind about my biological parents but I did not know who or how to ask. Each time I tried to talk to my parents about the “who” and the “why,” they

would get upset and shut the conversation down in a second. They had always loved and treated me as if I was their flesh and blood. They saw no reason to do otherwise. After all, they had raised me since the day I was born. Everyone by now had to know that adoption was a good thing – a blessing for both the parents and the child. I did, however, manage to squeeze from them a little piece of the process:

The year was 1958. My biological mother (whom they did not know or ever meet) had gone to the same family doctor as my parents. She chose not to get an abortion and sought the doctor’s guidance in finding a good home for her soon-to-born baby. The entire process was pre-planned and my parents would joyfully welcome either a baby boy or girl! It didn’t matter to them which gender. They would be receiving a bundle of joy soon!

I was grateful and thankful for my parents sharing what they knew even though they did not like talking about it, so I accepted what they had to say and did not push them any further. I loved them – they were my parents. Yes, I still had questions: Who was she? Where was she? Did she live close by? Why did she give me up in the first place? Does she know who I am? So many questions remained unanswered and in the back of my mind for a long time.

Years later when my grandmother passed away, I was standing with my family at her gravesite. The burial service had just completed.

The caretaker of the church cemetery approached me, and he caught me, as well as the rest of my family, by surprise when he called me by name and blurted out something to the effect of “I’m a good friend of your real mom,” and “She’s been wondering how you are doing and would like to meet you!” Needless to say, I was dumbfounded and had no idea how to respond. I remember looking around and seeing the astonished looks on the faces of all of my family. My mother immediately rushed to the head car of the funeral procession. My aunt sternly glared at him as if there were daggers coming out of her eyes and heading straight for his heart. “She *has* her real family here right now!” she said. He proceeded to apologize and then hurriedly walked away realizing his lack of tact and respect. Our family never spoke of that incident again. But those old unanswered questions that were in the back of my mind began to slowly reemerge.

A few years later, my husband, at the time, asked me out of the blue if I would allow him to contact that cemetery caretaker and get information on my biological mother and possibly arrange a date and time to meet in person. I was at a loss for words. “What if” questions began running through my mind. “What if my parents find out? It would kill them to know.” “What if we do meet and I completely fall apart?” After thinking of all the possible scenarios, I finally conceded and

agreed to pursue the “investigation.” I had only one condition – my parents would *never* know. After a few weeks, it was done. Arrangements were made for a meeting to take place between my biological mother and me with each of our spouses “chaperoning” and serving as mediators. It would finally be happening. All the questions I had held in for all those years would finally be answered! Yet, “what ifs” were still clearly troubling. As the day of the meeting was approaching, my panic and nervousness gained momentum. I had no idea what to expect. My husband strived to keep me as calm as possible. Every time I spoke to my mother, I chose each word and phrase carefully so I would not let the cat out of the bag. She could not find out! It would kill her!

The day finally arrived, and I was an emotional seesaw. After forty-five years, I was going to find out the whole truth once and for all. As we pulled into the parking lot, my husband, who always had *great timing*, asked me a question: “So what’s the first thing you are going to say to your mom?”

“What! After these past few weeks trying to keep me calm, he asks me this *now*?” But after a very brief moment of hysteria, my panic and nervousness dimmed, and a peace came over me like I had never felt before. I knew then

everything was going to be okay. “You’ll find out,” I said with a smile. “Let’s go inside.” When we entered the building, I scanned around the room and of all the people I spotted her: There she was! I knew it was her; it was like looking into a mirror – a reflection of myself – same-shaped cheeks, nose, chin, and blue eyes. We both smiled as we introduced ourselves and then sat down facing each other with our husbands by our sides to hold our hands. She spoke first, and I listened intently and with an open heart and mind. I could tell she was nervous and cautious in choosing her words. She carefully told me her story, answering all of my questions without me having to say a word. I realized then how much pain she must have been in through the years.

She was seventeen years old and already had a one-year-old son when she became pregnant again. She did not know who the father was, and she was living with her mother who told her she was too young to have another child. If she chose to keep the baby, she would have to move out and be on her own. To her, abortion was not an option, so her only alternative was to put up the baby for adoption. She continued explaining that her young son, my blood brother, was too young to remember her pregnancy and to this day knows nothing

of his younger sister. It was shortly after I was born when she began dating and eventually married her husband and had two daughters. They, too, know nothing of their big sister. And then, she apologized for not telling her children – my siblings -- about my existence. She did not know how they would react. Would they think less of her? Would their love for her die because she did not share with them that part of her life? She is their mother. With tears gliding down our cheeks, I touched her hand. I had not spoken a word while she was sharing. I looked into her teary blue eyes, smiled, and softly said, “Thank you.” She looked puzzled. “Thank you for not aborting me and for giving me life. Thank you for allowing me the privilege of being raised by wonderful parents, and thank you for sharing your story.” I looked over to my husband sitting next to me, his arm on my shoulder, and I smiled. He returned the smile in affirmation of the first words I spoke to my mom. We continued to talk for a good amount of time sharing what was going on in our lives at the time. We exchanged addresses and said we would write to each other. Perhaps we would discretely meet again after the holidays that year. After hugging and saying goodbye, we went our separate ways. I felt relieved and at peace.

A year later, my husband and I took a job together as house parents at a children’s group home and relocated to another state. At first, I

was hesitant and unsure if I could be a suitable “parent.” Was I qualified? I, myself, never gave birth or raised a child of my own. Could I give the love and guidance to children who were not my flesh and blood? These children all had their own story and now I had mine. Who better than I would be more qualified—with a story like mine? The teenagers we had in our home each had their own unique family situation and reason why they were placed there. Most came from dysfunctional families and some had no parents at all. They were orphans or disowned and many were misunderstood by society. We gave them *all* our love, support, and guidance. They so deserved it. Even though they were not *my* flesh and blood, I loved them like they were my own. I thought of my biological mother often during that time, and it was also during that time when we began losing touch.

It has been eight years since I said goodbye to those teenagers. I have returned to the state where my life began. Looking back, I realize that being a “parent” was the best “job” I had ever had. Through the help of social networking, I have remained connected with a few of the girls who have grown into young women and beautiful inside and out. One is a single mother raising an adorable baby daughter on her own. Every time we chat, she always makes it a point to thank me for being a positive influence in her life and showing her love, respect, understanding, and guidance.



She considers me her “long-distance mom,” and that will never change. What a wonderful and rewarding feeling it is to know I have made an impact in her life! My parents, too, knew how much they influenced me, “their little girl,” and I inherited the values they partook in my life. Both passed away last year and I miss them terribly.

I sometimes pull out of the closet a box of old photographs labelled “Jan.” There’s something intriguing about looking through old photographs. I like to re-explore the faces and the places in those pictures and I keep going back to the image of a little happy girl with permed hair, which always puts a smile on my face—but also reminds me of a mother who is in the distance. I wonder if *she* is alive and well. Has she ever told her children of her other “little girl?” Should I write to her? A whole new set of questions begins running through my mind.



## Unspoken Answer

*Gilberto Diaz*

The autumn sun  
exhales,  
a long sigh.....  
and as it falls  
asleep,  
snuggling under the blanket  
of evening,  
sets the sky on fire.

Past our car’s window  
(partly opened/partly closed)  
fast moving scenes-  
trees stretching out their branches  
as darkness drowns them  
worship the heaven’s fading light  
and as they sway in prayer  
yearning for spring’s return  
their dying and yellowing leaves  
tumble silently through the air  
to the decay of the ground unseen-  
roll by me in a blur of speed.

Alone with my thoughts  
(she with her own-unshared)  
a feeling of numbing cold grows.  
“Is this how love begins to go?”  
The question echoes,  
without an audible response,  
but we both know  
and the motor hums in agreement,  
as the vehicle continues to travel  
down an endless road.

**FACING PAGE:**  
*Time Stood Still*  
Shelby Heckman

## A Compassionate Science: The Intersection of Epicurean Philosophy and Nursing Practice

Janelle M. Zimmerman

The philosophy of the third century BCE philosopher Epicurus is not concerned simply with obscure theoretical considerations but provides a practical guide to living well. As biographer David Konstan notes, the Greek philosopher “Epicurus understood the task of philosophy first and foremost as a form of *therapy for life*, since the philosophy that does not heal the soul is no better than a medicine that cannot heal the body” [emphasis added] (6). There are many connections between Epicurus’ philosophy and modern nursing practice and theory, and the connection is not mere chance. Epicurus’ basic tenet of eudemonia (variously translated as happiness, satisfaction, or human flourishing) as the ultimate end of human life and his emphasis on empirical rather than theoretical knowledge shaped the thought of nineteenth century philosopher John Stuart Mill (Kessler 116), who in turn strongly influenced Florence Nightingale, his contemporary and the founder of modern nursing. Nightingale’s impact on nursing shapes today’s nursing practice in

many ways. The intersection of philosophy and nursing is filled with rich insights into the nature of illness, health, and happiness. Epicurean philosophy as expressed in modern nursing practice leads to an empirical, humanistic, and holistic approach to nursing.

Though abstract, nursing philosophy has practical applications in routine nursing practice, allowing the nursing professional to understand the nature of health and happiness. The historical account of nursing, as well as my own experience as a nurse aide at Ephrata Community Hospital, corroborates this belief. When I was a young child, my mother warned me—more than half seriously—that my fascination with abstract questions might lead to being too heavenly minded to be of any earthly use. Despite her warnings, this penchant has not been useless or impractical. I have spent a lot of time thinking about the philosophical underpinnings of modern nursing practice. What I have learned through studying philosophy has helped me understand the practice of the healing arts, particularly

when working with seriously ill or dying patients. I am better able to understand their concerns and questions about the nature of life and death, and thus better able to meet the patient’s needs.

Epicurean philosophy focuses on eudemonia (happiness, satisfaction, or human flourishing) as the goal of human life. Eudemonia is an interesting philosophical concept, with intriguing applications for nursing practice. For both the nurse and the patient, living in a state of eudemonia is a major achievement. Nurses seek to find in their life and career the satisfaction and fulfillment implied in eudemonia, while also helping their patients to find eudemonia in their lives. The nursing professional has two parallel goals—gaining eudemonia for themselves and helping their patients reach eudemonia. Nursing as a path to eudemonia means finding fulfillment and “flow” or engagement (Seligman 166) in the daily round of caregiving. The nursing professional takes a significant role in helping the patient work with their illness, and helps the patient find at least a measure of contentment and flourishing in their pain and state of disease. Nursing care based on Epicurean philosophy attempts to alleviate both mental and physical pain and un-ease.

Epicurean philosophy is often seen as focusing solely on the increase of physical pleasure and fulfillment of physical desires,

while Epicurus actually saw mental and intellectual pleasure as being equal to physical pleasure. This attitude is typical of the Greek thinkers, to whom the ideal human combined strength and elegance of body with that of the mind (Costello). Epicurus emphasized the removal of pain and the establishment of long-term fulfillment as the pathway to lasting pleasure (or contentment): “The magnitude of pleasure reaches its limit in the removal of all pain. When pleasure is present, as long as it is uninterrupted, there is no pain either of body or of mind or of both together” (“Principle Doctrines” 3). Reducing malaise and disease is a way to reach this condition of flourishing. An Epicurean approach to nursing care does not focus solely on reducing the patient’s physical pain, but also acknowledges the link between physical and emotional well-being. Through this approach, nursing practice promotes eudemonia.

Epicurus saw eudemonia as the ultimate goal of human life. Although he did not use that same term, the eighteenth century philosopher John Stuart Mill was also a major proponent of the theory that happiness is the ultimate goal of human life. He states, “The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals ‘utility’ or the ‘greatest happiness principle’ holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. . . . The utilitarian

doctrine is that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as the end; all other things being desirable only as means to that end” (116). Depending on the individual’s definition of happiness, the utilitarian doctrine can lead to sheer selfish hedonism or to a selfless devotion to a greater cause. When—as in Epicurean philosophy—happiness is considered synonymous with eudemonia or human flourishing, utilitarianism tends toward the latter.

Recent research in positive psychology provides a practical guideline for reaching eudemonia, which is the ultimate end of both Epicurus’ and Mill’s philosophy. Researchers have found some intriguing insights into what humans need to reach eudemonia. Contrary to popular thinking, happiness and ill health are not mutually exclusive; and there is more to eudemonia than mere physical good health. Psychologist Martin Seligman concludes that reaching eudemonia is deceptively simple. At the highest level of happiness, one is using one’s strengths toward a cause larger than oneself: “The meaningful life . . . [is] using your signature strengths in the service of something larger than you are” (249). This route gives life meaning. It satisfies a longing for purpose in life and is the antidote to the “fidgeting until we die” syndrome (8).

Seligman’s multifaceted approach outlines the foundations of finding eudemonia.

He proposes three routes for reaching eudemonia—(1) increasing positive emotions, (2) reaching a state of apparent timelessness or ‘flow,’ and (3) using one’s strengths toward something larger than oneself (7-14). For the practicing nurse, Seligman’s methodology holds the key to happiness and fulfillment in professional practice. Nurses can continually find moments of joy in their work and have an underlying sense of deep fulfillment even on days when nothing seems to go right. Working together as a team increases positive emotions, and reinforces that all staff members are working together for a purpose larger than themselves. They may also experience the state of ‘flow’—time never flies so fast, as when one is totally engaged in what one is doing. Seligman’s guidelines thus provide a practical approach for achieving eudemonia, which is the ultimate end of both Mill and Epicurus’ philosophies.

Modern practice often minimizes the philosophical aspects of nursing in favor of scientific, evidence-based nursing practice. The empirical effectiveness of the scientific method supports Epicurus, Mill, and Nightingale’s insistence on empirical observation and judgment. Following this empirical emphasis, nursing today is almost exclusively evidence-based practice, in which recommendations based on empirical studies determine the best nursing interventions. For example, when a patient arrives at the emergency room with

stroke symptoms (acute ischemic stroke), care follows a strict protocol that dictates which tests are used, which drugs are given, and when these procedures are done. Researchers have extensively studied acute ischemia treatments and outcomes, and scientific research is the basis for most nursing actions. Recommendations for best practice are dynamic and constantly changing as new studies reveal improved methods. Building on the utilitarian ideology of John Stuart Mill, nursing leader Florence Nightingale implemented this scientific method in the nineteenth century, but the scientific method has roots more than two thousand years earlier in the philosophy of third century BCE atomist philosopher Epicurus (McDonald 9; “Principal Doctrines” 12).

Epicurus believed that a rigorous, empirical study of nature was necessary for true happiness—as did John Stuart Mill, many centuries later. Epicurus was one of the first philosophers to insist on making judgments based on empirical observation rather than abstract reasoning. “It would be impossible to banish fears on matters of the highest importance,” Epicurus claims, “if a person did not know the nature of the whole universe, but lived in dread of what the legend tells us. Hence without the study of nature there is no enjoyment of unmixed pleasures” (“Principle Doctrines” 12). Accurate observation is necessary for understanding the world around

us and reasoning after having observed is important. As Epicurus notes, “[I]t is through the senses that we must by necessity form a judgment about the imperceptible by means of reason” (*Essential* 21). Centuries later, Mill echoed this thought and argued that we make predictions based on patterns we observe in the world around us (Wilson 5). This logic leads to modern empirical science, and—indirectly—evidence-based nursing practice.

Nightingale argued that since physical laws are predictable and certain, therefore medical personnel can discover which actions will promote health rather than disease. Observation is an essential primary step in discovering these laws. Nightingale states, “The most important practical lesson that can be given to nurses is to teach them what to observe—how to observe—what symptoms indicate improvement—what the reverse—which are of importance—which are of none. . . . All this ought to make part, and an essential part, of the training of every nurse” (105). As the healthcare professional closest to the patient, the nurse is best able to observe minute changes. A nurse skilled in the scientific method will not only observe; s/ he will also make deductions based on those observations and will adjust care accordingly.

Scientific nursing practice, as above, is the practical application of Epicurus’ and Mill’s assessment of how humans gain and use knowledge about the physical world. Epicurus

stated the foundational principle of modern science when he argued that we must make judgments based on empirical observation. John Stuart Mill takes this argument further and, as stated in Wilson, “argues that the rules of scientific method evolve out of the spontaneous inductions about the world that we make as embodied creatures” (5). According to biographer Fred Wilson, Mill said that in observing the world, we discover recurring patterns and learn to make predictions based on the patterns we observe. When our predictions are incorrect, we realize the need to revise our interpretation (5). Mill’s argument is an elegant approximation of the modern scientific method, where we test a hypothesis via experiments, and confirm, revise, or reject the hypothesis based on the empirical evidence of the results.

Mill’s reasoning influenced the common-sense ideology of his contemporary Florence Nightingale (McDonald 9). Although Nightingale believed that published scientific writings are an important source of information, she contended that direct observation and experience are more valuable: “To watch for the opinions, then, which the patient’s stomach gives, rather than to read ‘analyses of foods,’ is the business of all those who have to settle what the patient is to eat—perhaps the most important thing to be provided for him after the air he is to breath” (75). Nightingale

emphasized a common-sense approach—keen observation coupled with immediate practical action. Likewise, today’s nursing practice insists on continued evaluation of current practice to identify specific actions that can be changed to improve patient safety, comfort, and healing.

In the world of evidence-based nursing, almost every nursing action is based on experiential evidence, prompted by observation and subsequent revision of practice. For example, a visitor walking into many hospitals may notice nurse aides seemingly loafing in front of partially closed bathroom doors in patient rooms. This apparent dawdling is evidence based nursing in practice. Studies have shown that patients are less apt to fall if staff members stay right outside the bathroom door, rather than instructing patients to ring when they are ready to leave the bathroom (Dacenko-Graw and Holm 225). In hospitals implementing this practice and several others, patient falls have fallen by approximately fifty percent per 1,000 patient days—providing empirical confirmation of effectiveness (223). The empirical effectiveness of the scientific method supports Epicurus, Mill, and Nightingale’s insistence on empirical observation and judgment.

In her own writings, Nightingale utilized the scientific perspective, making generous use of statistics, graphs, and figures, usually based on a rigorous analysis of her own and others’

observations (McDonald 177). Even where Nightingale was mistaken about the source of a disease, her preventative measures are still effective. For example, she thought malaria was caused by miasma rising from swampy ground, and recommended building houses only on higher ground. This practice is effective because it will avoid both the miasma and the mosquitoes that are the true vectors of malaria (McDonald 101).

Nightingale applied principles of science and compassion and elevated nursing from a demeaning occupation seen as fit only for spinsters and workhouse drudges, to a respected profession that combines compassionate care and rigorous science. Nightingale’s influence on nursing extends far beyond the introduction of statistical analysis. Jeanne LeVasseur, nursing theorist at the University of Connecticut, points out that Nightingale has transformed nursing through the greatness of her vision for the future:

Nightingale, as the originator and guardian of modern nursing, has set her imprint on the broad scope and holistic vision of nursing. Her belief that nursing ought to extend beyond the mere application of diets and poultices to include the management of the environment, attentive observation, and care for psychosocial needs, transformed nursing by expanding its scope and reconfiguring its character. (284)

Nightingale’s seminal contribution to

nursing practice was the combination of science and compassion, which attends to the physical and the psychosocial needs of the patient and provides fulfillment to the nursing professional.

This holistic scope of nursing practice links to its philosophical roots. As related to nursing practice, Epicurean philosophy provides an eminently practical and humanistic guideline for the full range of nursing practice. In Epicurus’ thinking, “Humans are born with a full capacity for flourishing. . . . Eudaemonia, or fulfillment, is not a mere negative state, free of anxiety, pain and everything fun. It is also a positive state, in that it implies a fully functional, unimpeded activity using all the faculties. It is by no means stagnant or inactive” (Fogel and Auer). Many areas of modern nursing practice reflect this dynamic humanistic outlook. By the very nature of their work, which is both a caring profession and a scientific discipline, nurses must combine hard-nosed practicality, unflinching realism, and unflinching compassion and helpfulness. Modern nursing is a holistic practice that treats the whole person.

If nursing were only a scientific endeavor, it would lose much of the power to heal. The blending of the disparate themes of science and humanistic compassion is a unique feature of nursing. That combination can be truly powerful, as in the case of a young man paralyzed in the same accident that killed his

drunken girlfriend. His slight young body rested on a sophisticated mattress, which automatically turned every fifteen minutes while pumping air through a system of waffles designed to keep pressure off his ulcerated buttocks. Tyler was needy, both physically and emotionally. He was in pain, and there was very little we could do to help his tailbone, or his emotions, heal faster. He brought home to me—again—that nursing is not just about medicine and bandages. Nurses are caregivers first, technicians second. They care for the soul as much as, if not more than, the body. Our smiles and cheerful faces, our willingness to spend time with Tyler, were just as important as the pills and fancy beds, if not more so. As nurses treat the whole person and not just the

physical disease, they can increase the healing impact of their caring actions.

If medical and nursing staff assumes that the state of the body and the state of the mind and soul are inter-related, they will focus on decreasing bodily pain and mental anguish. The medical and nursing staff is responsible for assisting the patient to attain this condition of health, as the ones most competent to fill the role of advisor to the unhealthy and the unhappy. Dr. Charles T. Wolfe states that the “physician philosopher, which is to say, the medical Epicurean” is in the best position to “know the functional laws of our *organization*.” Those who combine medical and scientific knowledge with the philosophical method are in the ideal position to help others attain freedom from

bodily pain and mental anguish—which is Nightingale’s goal and Epicurus’ highest good.

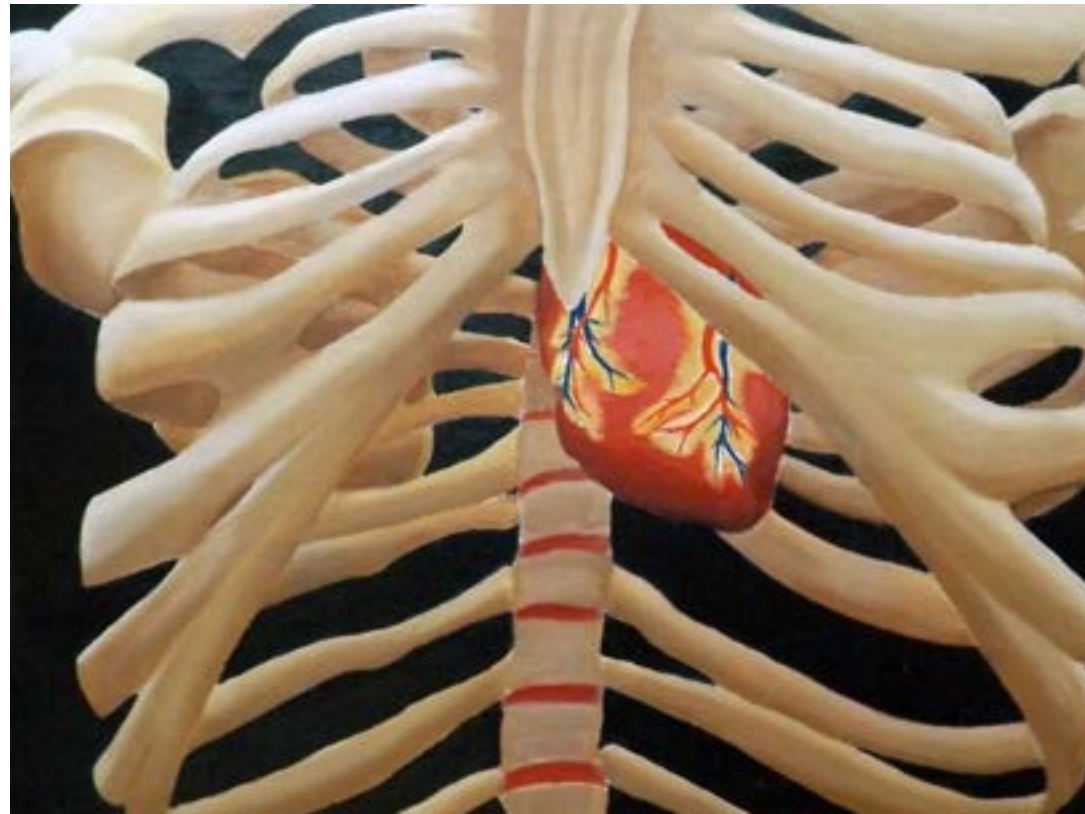
Epicurus believed that the soul (the mind or seat of consciousness) is intrinsically attached to the atoms that form the body—consequently there is no way for the soul to survive the body’s demise (*Essential* 33). This dependence of soul (or mind) upon body is closely related to professor and nursing theorist Virginia Henderson’s theory of emotional and physiological balance. “[A]n emotion is actually our interpretation of cellular response to fluctuations in the chemical composition of the intercellular fluids which,” according to Henderson, “produce muscle tension, changes in the heart and respiratory rate, and other reactions. Mind and body have come to be inseparable in my thinking” (15).

Epicurus intended his philosophy of the interdependence of mind and body primarily as a means of delivering humans from irrational fears, including fear of the ancient gods and fear of death (Copleston 404). He approached both in a similar way, by arguing that nothing exists except what can be perceived by the senses; hence, neither the gods nor life after death is real. To Epicurus, the soul is merely invisible atoms attached to the body; it dissolves when we die: “It is not possible to imagine the soul existing and having sensation without the body” (*Essential* 33). For the nursing professional providing end-of-life care

to those who are afraid of dying and death, this philosophy is not likely to provide assurance or relief from fears, thus failing to alleviate the emotional pain associated with death and the dying process.

Other philosophers argued for a more dualistic view of the human soul and body, believing that there must be something more to the human mind than what can be empirically observed (Kessler 184). This argument speaks to the belief that humans universally seek to have a faith in something greater than themselves, and seek to find a purpose underlying the apparent chaos we observe (Henslin 525). This understanding can enhance the practice of the nursing professional by allowing them to approach end-of-life care in a way that incorporates the belief system of the patient, acknowledging death as a passage, not an end but a change, even a new beginning.

This is true for a patient like Stephanie, who had just received a diagnosis of renal cancer, which has a very low rate of successful treatment and a very high mortality rate. The chances were extremely slim that she would live to hold the great-grandbabies, which her six-year-old grandson had promised to her. Telling Stephanie that she wouldn’t feel anything after she died would be scant comfort. Acknowledging the existence of ‘something beyond’ allowed her to integrate her desperate faith with her deepest hopes. Stephanie could



*Dying Memory*  
Jorge Quiros

face the ending of her life; she could find hope in the belief that her body might die, but her soul would not. Humane and compassionate nursing care will incorporate the beliefs of the individual when providing psychosocial care for the dying individual. In this way, the patient can attain Epicurus' end of eudemonia, though not by his means.

Even those nurses who are most passionate about the importance of loving, professional care for their patients often complain that philosophy doesn't make them a better nurse. Many do not take time to think about the implications of philosophical inquiries and their relevance to nursing practice. They forget what the founder of modern nursing knew—that nursing is as much an art as a science, and requires far more than technical knowledge and skills, as important as these are. As noted in Dock, Florence Nightingale insisted that nursing is an art requiring strenuous training, hard work, and faithful study (129). To be truly effective in nursing practice involves understanding the philosophical underpinnings of nursing theory and practice.

Professor and nursing theorist Virginia Henderson makes the valid point that truly effective nurses need to have access to higher education and the liberal teaching and learning that occurs in the higher educational institutions: "In order to practice as an expert in her own right and to use the scientific approach

to the improvement of practice, the nurse needs the kind of education that, in our society, is available only in colleges and universities. . . . Her work demands a universal sympathy for, and the understanding of, diverse human beings" (96-97). Nurses are operating on a foundation laid by great thinkers throughout history. They can only build on that foundation if they understand it and love it, for "[i]n the end we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught" (Dioum). While scientific research continues to be the basis for evidence-based nursing practice, the humanities, including philosophy, have been and are important components in the education of tomorrow's nurses.

From the philosophy of Epicurus, John Stuart Mill, and Florence Nightingale, nurses have many rich insights into the nature of illness, health, and happiness. As the nursing profession continues to grow and develop, the insight gained from the founders is no less important. From the students still struggling to distinguish the sounds of Korotkoff while measuring blood pressure, to the veterans with fifty years under their stethoscopes, philosophy is relevant to all nurses.

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*West Reading Frog Band*  
Rafael Nuñez

## One Spring Day

*J. David Roslin*

He had traveled through many places and many times over the years, but the one place he found himself going back to most be a warm spring day in May 1965. He was seventeen and sitting alone on a park bench reading his first James Bond novel, *Casino Royale*. He was at the part in the story where Bond had met Vespa for the first time. Behind him, the water from a trickling brook sang over the rocks as it flowed and wound its way along the boundary of a path leading from the entrance to the park's center. The slow gentle breeze filled the air with the smell of the honeysuckle and lilac bushes that lined the path.

"This must be the way Vespa smells," he thought to himself. "I in the springtime, a young man's heart turns to thoughts of love," as the poet say. His daydreaming was broken by the sound of a car entering the parking area that ended where the widening path began. He turned and looked up from his book. A shining new blue Mustang convertible pulled into the shadowed glade

to his left. The Mustang was named after the strong—untamed—horse that ran across the open plains of America and it did its best to live up to it. The top was down and Johnny Mathis was singing on the radio. The engine purred as if a sleeping kitten had cuddled itself down and into a soft blanket. It was low, sleek, and Mystic Blue with warm cream upholstery and chrome wheels shimmering in the sunlight. The engine died and the car door opened.

He could only see her from the back and the long hair cascaded down to the middle of it. It shone in the sunlight like a freshly buffed Chestnut. She exited the car and closed the door. His eyes did not move, but when she turned hers met his. What he beheld was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. To this day, she remained a misty memory that would always haunt the corner of his mind.

She was everything that a boy of seventeen would want a woman to be. The blue of her eyes matched the blue of the car. Her glance

had frozen his every movement. The dress was peach with small black buttons cascading down the front. He could see only a part of the tan he knew must cover all of her body. The neckline was open wide to the third button. Her breasts were high, firm, and large. He could see the nipples pressing against the light cotton fabric as it clung to every curve of her long slender body. She looked to be about twenty years old. The smile she gave him made his heart pound louder in his ears. The lump got bigger in his... throat. Her lips were made to be kissed. They looked soft, full, and moist. She looked at him, smiled, and then whispered, "Hello."

Her teeth sparkled like pearls. The tone in her voice sounded mischievous. The sight of her still held him motionless as she came closer. The winds of spring chose that moment to send his imagination into overtime. The dress blew closer against her body. The fabric clung to her even tighter, as the thin line of her panties showed through. She stopped for a moment, looked up at him, and smiled. The breeze fell away and she patted down her dress. He still was unable to complete a full breath or remove his eyes from her. He watched her walk; it was flawless. In that dream state, he rose and walked toward her. He took her hand and pulled her close. His arms wrapped around her; he could feel the warmth of her body melt into him. The kiss was soft. The moisture in her breath mingled with his. The taste of cherry

and the tang of oranges shoot through her lips to his. He knew that he had to hold on to this moment forever. Her hand was on the back of his neck, and the vibrations from the kiss were moving into his very sole. He felt the heat rise between them, as their bodies locked together and they became one. He took a deep breath; the dream was over. His mind once again fell into gear. When he turned, it was just in time to see the last of her disappear around the end to the path. He turned and looked once more at the Mustang. The truth will not be denied. He heard a voice inside say, "For as long as you live, you are never going to own a car that cool or hold a woman that beautiful in your arms."

Want to make a bet?





## Desolation

*Nicole Gausch*

Nothing.  
Ever appeared.  
Not something, not anything.  
She closed her eyes,  
Hoping,  
When she opened them  
Things would not be so stark  
Or perhaps,  
Not so

Desolate.

Or maybe, just maybe,  
She could be somewhere else,  
Entirely.

*Mother's Day*  
Rafael Nuñez



*Fall Harvest*

Desirae Lesher

## Digging Deeper: Are the Homeless *Really* Undeserving?

Robyn Philactos

While walking on the sidewalks of many major American cities, it is apparent that there are less fortunate citizens living there; people living on the streets, sleeping on boxes, or begging for food or money are abundant. On any given night, there are 633,782 people experiencing homelessness, a number that is hard to grasp (“U.S. Homelessness”)—and, of course, people walking by, sneering, and continuing to walk right past them. While it is understandable that those people walking by may be having a rough economic time themselves, it does not mean they should be looking disgustedly at those that do not have a bed to sleep in. Of course, there are those people that walk by and throw a dollar or two into their cup or the neighborhood church that sponsors soup kitchens or shelter for cold winter nights. It seems like such a shame that in a country of great wealth and prosperity, some are still living on the streets without the resources necessary to live productive lives. This is, however, our America and the homeless of America are often misunderstood; they are often thought to be lazy—too lazy to secure

and maintain a steady job—and undeserving. This is our America and those of us who have never experienced homelessness seem to forget that there is often more than meets the eye and that they are fellow human beings who have been victimized by circumstance and have other reasons behind their unfortunate living situation.

In order to comprehend why the homeless are often misunderstood, one must first understand the causes of homelessness in America. While alcohol and drug addiction are causes, they are, surprisingly, on the bottom of the list. The more common causes of homelessness are: foreclosure due to the recent economic recession, poverty, the decreased job market and fewer benefits from secure jobs, decline in public assistance, lack of affordable housing and health care, domestic violence, and mental illness (“Homeless in America: Why Are People Homeless?”). While the rate of foreclosures has fallen since the recession in 2008, the fight to keep one’s house is still not over. In April 2013, foreclosures were down 16% from April 2012; however, 52,000 foreclosures

were completed in April 2013, showing that the issue has yet to be eliminated (“National Foreclosure Report”). The decline in public assistance has caused many people living on Supplemental Security Income to be stuck for money because of higher rents and lower checks (“Homeless in America: Why Are People Homeless?”). The lack of affordable housing and health care has also greatly contributed to the homeless population. If someone is uninsured, a serious illness or disability

may eventually be the cause of homelessness, simply because of the high price of health care in America.

One of the main causes of homelessness in America may be mental illness. According to *National Coalition for the Homeless*,

“Approximately 16% of the single adult homeless population suffers from some form of severe and persistent mental illness” (“Homeless in America: Why Are People Homeless?”). People that have suffered from mental illnesses have been scorned throughout history; lack of support and awareness has placed these people on the streets time and time again. The mentally ill, who also happen to be homeless, are more at risk of being in danger because they are unable to support themselves in the outside world. Without adequate resources, these people are

basically left for death, and the ones that end up living are ridiculed by passersby for not taking care of themselves, even though they may not have another choice but to be where they are. Due to the lack of health care, homeless individuals that suffer from mental illness are often doomed to be forever forgotten on the streets of a major city; if there was something that the homeless could attain, such as medical assistance, medication, or institutionalization,

I believe the amount of ridicule that homeless people receive would decrease drastically.

Those Americans that walk past the homeless often have the feeling of being somewhat invincible; the causes of homeless are not clear to them, leading them to base their judgments upon misconceptions.

There seems to be a constant conflict between those that have homes and those that do not. In his essay, “Parallel Dualisms: Understanding America’s Apathy for the Homeless

through the Sociological Imagination,” Colin Allen, a then-Freshman undergraduate student at the University of Massachusetts Boston, says that it is “basically a no-brainer” that if he polled 100 people on the street about whether or not they wanted homelessness to be eliminated, they would answer “Yes” (52). Allen later describes that imagining “the feeling of having nothing to one’s own name” is almost hard to fathom because of America’s capitalist society, where Americans strive to get the bigger car, bigger paycheck, or bigger house (52). Those

Americans that walk past the homeless often have the feeling of being somewhat invincible; the causes of homeless are not clear to them, leading them to base their judgments upon misconceptions. I agree with Allen's statement that Americans favor the capitalist society; we are driven by how much money we make, how big our houses are compared to our neighbors' and how new and fancy our cars are. Even when the formerly rich are at risk for losing their homes, the feeling of being entitled to their property is overwhelming. Those people are unable to imagine the fact that they might have nothing to their name the next morning, and they are completely unsure of what they will do when that time comes.

The people that have a hard time fathoming that they might one day have nothing to their name may feel as though they are deserving of a home, goods, etc., while the homeless are undeserving, which has left them in the situation that they are in. In his book titled *The War Against the Poor: The Underclass and Antipoverty Policy*, Herbert J. Gans, a Sociology professor at Columbia University, states that the notion that some classes are "undeserving" has not changed over the course of history:

All the class strata seem agreed, however, on the undeservingness of the poor they deem to be criminal and deviant. Moreover, since the characterization of the undeserving poor has changed remarkably little over at least the last

five hundred years, the undeservingness of the poor is not simply a problem of a modernity or postmodernity; capitalism, classical and advanced; or socialism, state, or otherwise. . . . The undeserving poor constitute a perceived threat to the better-off classes; and judging some poor people as undeserving has positive uses or benefits for various institutions and interest groups in society. (75)

Further into his book, Gans explains how the labeling of the homeless as "undeserving" may actually have some benefits for certain interest groups and institutions in society. The homeless are often viewed as "scapegoats" by the affluent who "may be displacing anxieties about the economy and society on welfare recipients," or the homeless, who therefore become "targets of displaced threats," keeping the more fortunate classes from seeing the actual problems that produce homelessness in the first place and making it possible for certain interest groups to unfairly place our real issues, such as social and economic injustice, on the undeserving (77). According to Gans, the poor as the scapegoat or the notion that it is the behavior of the poor reflects "a general theme of American popular ideology":

[It is assumed] that most behavior is caused by the holding and practicing of values, with good behavior resulting from good values and bad behavior from bad values. . . . As a result, if poor people behave in ways that diverge from

those thought to be mainstream, it is ascribed to their rejection of mainstream values and not to their inability to act in accord with these values. (83)

The simple fact that the poor and the homeless are people that have been defeated by life itself or, as Gans suggests, by the social and economic system, at least shows us that poverty and homelessness should be understood broadly and that our society is flawed and there are issues right below our feet, or even at our feet.

The homeless of America are placed in a terrible light and most of the time misunderstood. It is often the case that the homeless are believed to be lazy and undeserving of things that many of us take for granted; however, that is far from the truth. The homeless suffer from mental illness, are victims of the economic recession, or lack of assistance; generally, it is not the person's fault that they are homeless. Misconceptions that are made about the homeless lead to unfair judgments of them and keep us from understanding who they actually are. It is too often that there are news stories about how the homeless are the scum of the earth and should be eliminated; yes they should be eliminated, but they should be given homes and taken off of the streets, which should constitute their elimination. The existence of the homeless should not be mistaken for something that is

a burden to the country. The homeless should no longer be a scapegoat for larger issues facing our government such as affordable health care, decreasing job market, and care of the mentally ill. What makes the homeless less deserving than you or I to the right to have a prosperous life? The answer is: nothing.

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*Contorted*  
Chrissie Studenroth

**The Phoenix**  
*Stephanie Coriolan*

Alone, I ran away

From the damage of my own doing

I chased down the Sun and stars for eternities,  
To escape the ugly truth tainted by my mind  
With lies I told myself to dull the pain

And I never looked back once  
And so I will never know,  
What became of the ruins of the burned down forest,  
If there is a green leaf sprouting from the ground

If there is life clawing to the top  
From the deep pits of ravaged earth,  
I do not know...  
But I will never go back down

Such a treacherous road.



*Still Death*  
Marianna Mello



**Crosshairs--The Hunted**  
*Dawn Heimbach*

The buck stepped carefully as he descended the rocky, almost perpendicular mountainside. The light would be coming on the land again soon and he wanted to get to lower ground. This was the time of year of the big sound and he needed to be very careful. In the past few weeks, he had seen several females in his herd—those whom he had already impregnated—fall to the ground, never to get up again. Their bodies were cut open by the pale, hairless two-legged creatures, their mysterious inside parts left on the ground in a steaming heap, their empty carcasses dragged off. He had walked up to a mound of inside-the-skin parts recently and sniffed it sadly. It smelled like the red liquid leaked by pain and the yellow water that all of them pushed out several times a day, but there was also the underlying scent of the mother, a doe who had borne him seven fawns. He knew that the products of their recent mating, somewhere in the mess, would never become. He lifted his head and bellowed.

At the bottom of the mountain, the buck paused to check the wind. The stench of the two-leggeds was strong this morning, hanging throughout the woods. They tried to conceal

their odor, but he had had eight years to hone the scent detection skills that his nose provided. He would stay downwind and undercover.

Also on the wind: the musky, irresistible smell of does in estrous. Two—no, three! It was coming to the end of the annual sex-time, but the testosterone that coursed through his blood stream remained strong enough for him to be tempted. He dropped his head. He would have to keep his wits about him or risk being possessed by the two-leggeds. He lifted his head again to smell the pungent, beckoning odor of the females, and shivered when it reached his brain. Delicious.

The buck stepped off in the direction of the does into the path of the rising light. He traveled along familiar paths with lots of brush, never going into open spaces. Soon he was within several hundred yards of the does. He stopped to drink from the small stream, full now from recent rains. He nibbled at some sweet shoots of green grass, the last before they were covered with the white powder. He raised his head. His instinct sent him a feeling of unease, of something not as it should be. He froze. He realized that his path towards the does had changed his position with the air currents.

He was no longer downwind. The stink of the two-leggeds reached his nostrils, but it was not overpowering. It seemed to be several days old.

Keeping his head down, the buck took a few hesitant steps forward. He could not see them yet, but he knew the does were straight ahead of him, and the desire to procreate overrode the built-in safety features of his behavior patterns. Though not as strong as three weeks ago, the hormones still had tremendous control over him. His brain battled with the two instincts and he stepped forward again – into a spot where the brambles were thin.

And in that same instant, his ears—always moving back and forth, bringing him messages from the earth, the elements, and from other animals—registered the almost imperceptible sound of fabric moving. In the fraction of a second, realization hit him. His adrenal gland opened, flooding his body with the fight-or-flight epinephrine. The buck's large brown eyes opened even wider, his muscles tensed, his head turned to the right, and he saw it: the two-legged in the tree, pointing the big sound maker directly at him.

The buck's sight was not designed for detail, but he sensed the two-legged's gaze. Each faced the other, both with the instinct of survival coursing through them. The buck felt, in an instant, the two-legged's intent to kill. He gave one snort and jumped, carried forward by adrenaline, his powerful muscles propelling

him, his eyes scanning the terrain for obstacles. He bounded through the woods in typical flight pattern, taking two strides and then leaping high in an arc, even when the path was clear. He sailed gracefully over fallen trees as if his legs were spring-powered, his tail raised high to reveal the white underside, signaling danger. The big sounds repeated rapidly. He felt the air move as the flying rocks from the big sound stick whizzed past, close to his head. Some hit the trees. This spurred him on.

After covering a mile and a half at top speed, the buck's brain started slowing down and he realized that the big sound had stopped. He slowed to a walk, his breathing hard and ragged; his sides heaved and his legs shook. He stopped and put his head down, then raised it again. He snorted several times.

As his adrenaline levels returned to normal along with his breathing, the buck allowed himself to feel relief. He had narrowly escaped possession by the two-legged in the tree. He had been careless. Angrily, he shook his head, heavier now with the beautiful hard bone that would soon fall to the ground. He changed his direction and walked west, the two-legged momentarily forgotten.

But there would be more. There was always more, and during the time of the big sound, they all wanted the same thing.

Today, he had cheated death.

## Crosshairs--The Hunter

### *Dawn Heimbach*

The man walked slowly through the woods in the predawn darkness, stepping carefully to avoid rustling the carpet of now-dead leaves that covered the forest floor. The birds and small diurnal animals, whose scurrying and calls brought life to the daytime woods, were still sleeping. The only sound was the hunter's exhaled breath, which made little clouds of condensation as it met the cold air.

His neon orange coat, brightly visible in the daylight to anyone within several hundred feet, lost its power in the blackness.

The leaves rustled to his left, an explosion in the stillness. His flashlight revealed a large opossum, scurrying away faster than most people think possums can move.

Reaching the tree that graciously housed his stand, he positioned his rifle so that it pointed upward and behind and proceeded to climb the slim boards nailed to the trunk that served as steps. Once on the narrow platform, he stood and waited for the early morning light. He checked his watch. Dawn would break in twenty-three minutes.

An hour later, as the hunter stood surveying the area from his position above the ground, his practiced eye caught a hint of movement in

the brush around a stream. He watched. There! Something was definitely moving through the cover of blackberry brambles and thistle. He waited. As the hunter focused on the spot, the head of a magnificent buck—twelve points on a beautifully curved rack that arched and extended above the animal's muzzle—came into view as he raised his head from grazing to scan the area.

In a fraction of a second, the hunter's adrenal gland opened, flooding his body with the fight-or-flight epinephrine. His green eyes opened wide, his muscles tensed, and his heart began to beat faster and louder – so loud that he swore the buck would hear it.

“Steady,” he told himself silently. “Wait until he gives you a clear shot.”

The buck walked slowly forward, pausing after each step, his head up, testing the air.

The hunter's index finger tensed on the trigger of the rifle.

“Not yet... not yet...,” he commanded himself, trying to remain calm and loose so his muscles did not start shaking.

The buck took a few more steps forward. And suddenly, he was in a patch of thin brambles, his entire body visible. In that

same instant, as the hunter's finger tightened on the trigger, the buck turned his head and met the hunter's gaze. When the next second clicked, the buck jumped and ran. The hunter panned his rifle along with the buck's frantic movement, pulling off shots, but it was too late. There were too many trees and the animal was quickly out of range.

Why hadn't he pulled the trigger in the instant that the buck stepped into clear view? He was afraid of something like this happening since the gruesome incident at the hunting camp. His stomach swirled and ejected the remnants of his four a.m. breakfast as he realized that he actually felt relief at missing the shot.

This had never happened before. Fear washed over him; his trembling leg muscles threatened to let him fall. The hunter sat down on the tree stand with his knees up and his head between them, his hands clasped tightly behind his neck. As his body reeled with vertigo, he desperately gulped the crisp, autumn air into his lungs and forced it out again through pursed lips. It was a long while before he looked up.



## Cerise

*Catherine J. Mahony*

Mom was gone when I began to hemorrhage.  
A tidal wave of blood ushered me into adulthood-  
A crimson current propelled by an unexplained anatomy.  
I clung to my little white raft, defiled by the inevitable.  
Penetrated by confusion, I felt a twinge of uncertainty as a puddle formed.  
Birds and bees taunted me as I fell from a teetering branch:  
I fell by obligation, by force and by love.  
Apparitions of kitchen table talks haunted me now.  
Looking to the vast sky, asking the wind what a mother should have answered.  
Back seat of the bus education and street corner professors taught me wrong from right.  
Mom was gone when I found a warm piercing embrace.  
I laid back and received all I thought I deserved.  
Arms bruised and thighs sore.  
Soul desecrated and innocence lost.  
A single luminous beam infiltrated my abyss, implanting hope.  
Mom was there when I began to hemorrhage.  
I grasped her translucent hand through waves of scarlet.  
A regal cardinal always accompanied me in subtlety, with outstretched wings.  
Silently perched on a sturdy limb, she waited for me to take flight.

## Listen to Me

Brandy Aulenbach

**W**hat am I doing here? “Incarcerated?”  
*I’m depressed but that doesn’t make me crazy. Does it? Why won’t anyone just listen to me?*

“Incarcerated” is not the right word. I know that. According to my mother, a high school English teacher, it is an “exaggerated description made by a crazy teenager begging for attention” or something like that. I am locked in a concrete building forced to sit in group therapy and eat some sort of non-descriptive mush, a prison sentence as far as I am concerned. This was not *my* choice, but now here I am locked in the Southgate Youth Center against my will. I long to walk out those doors but since the building is nestled in the woods I am in the middle of nowhere; Apparently when you are seventeen, on the cusp of adulthood, your human rights do not yet exist. My mother was right though; I was begging, pleading even, for her to just listen to me, for anyone to listen. I am not crazy; I am just misunderstood. I think I got what I asked for, because everyone in the group is staring at me with anticipation. It is funny really; they are equally as screwed up as

myself, if not more, but their eyes are fixated on me as I nervously twist the ends of my long sleeve shirt. I can feel the fabric rubbing against my raw irritated skin; each tug of my sleeve brings a small release of my anxiety and, consequently, a sting that travels through my weak veins. They want me to acknowledge the source of my craziness. Hypocrites!

I guess I have daddy issues. Jesus, that sounds so cliché. What teenage girl does not have daddy issues? My dad died when I was thirteen. I call him “my dad” instead of “my father” because I feel a father has to *be there* to gain that title and he was never there. I cannot remember the last time I shared a birthday or holiday with him. My half-sister and half-brother could remember though; my dad loved his new family in a way that he never loved me. I bet he never missed any of their dance recitals or fifth-grade art galleries. *Thanks for the DNA, pops.* I swear I am not bitter, but dammit, I worked hard on those drawings. According to my therapist, Mr. Matthews aka Ryan, my dad’s absence had an impact on my dysfunctional habits and he is probably right to

some degree. My dad was a weekend dad with a severe drinking problem and, yes, he was absent. Ryan and the rest of the crazies want to know how I got here.

It was a Thursday in April when my life fell apart. I should not be able to remember that, but I cannot seem to forget. Easter came late that year and I was just settling into my holiday break, which consisted of repeat episodes of *The Real World*. My mom and stepdad were out and everything was going according to plan; I rolled out of bed around noon, poured myself a bowl of Lucky Charms, and planted myself on the couch. Life was exceptional. Then something out of place happened: my stepdad pulled our Ford Explorer into the driveway about three hours earlier than expected. My perfect afternoon was cut short when my mom came bursting through the door. Her face gave her away before she found her voice. I understood every word my mother could barely utter. She was crying when she told me that my father took his own life. *Good start. Breathe.* I remember being in awe. Why was she crying?—*as if she gave a damn.* I just stared into her swollen red eyes as I absorbed what should have been the most cataclysmic event of my being. I was not sad that he was gone because there was no difference really. In fact, I felt better because he finally had a reason to miss out on my life. What made me sad was the realization that I could never build a relationship. *That ship has not*

*only sailed but hit a fucking iceberg. Shit, don’t swear. Don’t draw attention.* “I was always okay with his absence throughout my life because I knew, deep down, that we could fix things.”

“What do you mean, ‘fix things’?”

Ryan’s flat voice broke my concentration and now all I can hear is the silence. *Silence can be so loud sometimes.* I felt as if I was moving through a dark house and someone was following me. The hairs on my neck were at attention and my ears were hyper alert as I studied the faces peering back at me. *I wonder if I look like them. They’re damaged –you can just tell.*

“Fix things,” I whisper, “I knew that if I wanted to I could forgive him and we could have a real relationship.” *Shit. He’s giving me that look. He thinks he knows why I’m so crazy. Wait. Not crazy. Great, now I think I’m crazy. Who the hell am I talking to anyway?*

“Continue!” was all Ryan said but I knew what he was thinking and he was wrong. I took a large breath of air into my lungs as I studied his face. Mr. Matthews, although he said “Ryan” was more comfortable, was the floor therapist. He treats every kid on the second floor of Southgate and, while there are roughly forty of us, he has a way of making it seem like he knows exactly who we are. *I bet they teach that in college.* His eyes were dark brown, almost black, but not as cold as black can be; inviting would be a more accurate description.



He was eager for me continue with my story, eager to get me to say the words that meant I was damaged because of my dad.

“I’m here because my mom thinks I’m crazy,” I snapped with an edge to my voice that startled everyone in the group, including Ryan. Before that they were all just vaguely aware that I was speaking. *He wants to know why I’m here. Fine! That’s the real reason. I’m here because I can’t be trusted with razors or even my god damn hair elastic. I’m here because I just want to feel something and she just won’t let me. No one will let me.* Ryan gave me a look like a teacher does when you have messed up and they want to see you after school. *Whatever!* He moves on to the next batshit crazy in our eclectic circle.

I never have anything to say in group. I have been here for two weeks and the most I have uttered is my name and age. I do not want these desperate kids to know who I am. I do not want to become comfortable here because I do not belong. As a matter of fact, I do not belong anywhere right now. I often wonder what I am going to do when I can finally get out of here. I cannot just go home because I do not have a home; I have a house that holds my stuff and is

occupied by people that barely know who I am. What am I going to do? *Maybe there really is something wrong with me.*

Group therapy is held every Tuesday and Thursday starting at four o’clock and drawing to a close around six o’clock, depending on whether or not the crazies get to chatting. After group we are sent to dinner and then we are free to spend the rest of our evenings however we please just as long as our activities are restricted to communication, reading, or writing. The clock just struck six o’clock and I gathered my security blanket, which was beginning to become stained from the weeks of filth, and made my way for the door when Ryan stopped me. He really does have a superintendent feel to his personality but his presence demands a different level of respect. He is completely approachable with his tall and lanky body and dark features nestled in his pale skin. Imagine a twenty-something hipster and you’ve got Ryan, black rimmed glasses and all. *I bet he drinks Starbucks.*

“I want to meet with you in my office after dinner,” he said with a twinge of concern in his voice. *Great! I shouldn’t have said anything in group today. Why the hell did I say anything? Now I have to tell him my stories. He’ll definitely think I’m crazy. Maybe that’s because I am crazy.* I was utterly deflated. I was hoping to get out of the center with a clean bill of health: “Normal”

would be in bold print on my record. I needed that so I could go home and show my mom that I was normal or at least not entirely screwed up; I’m just a teenager.

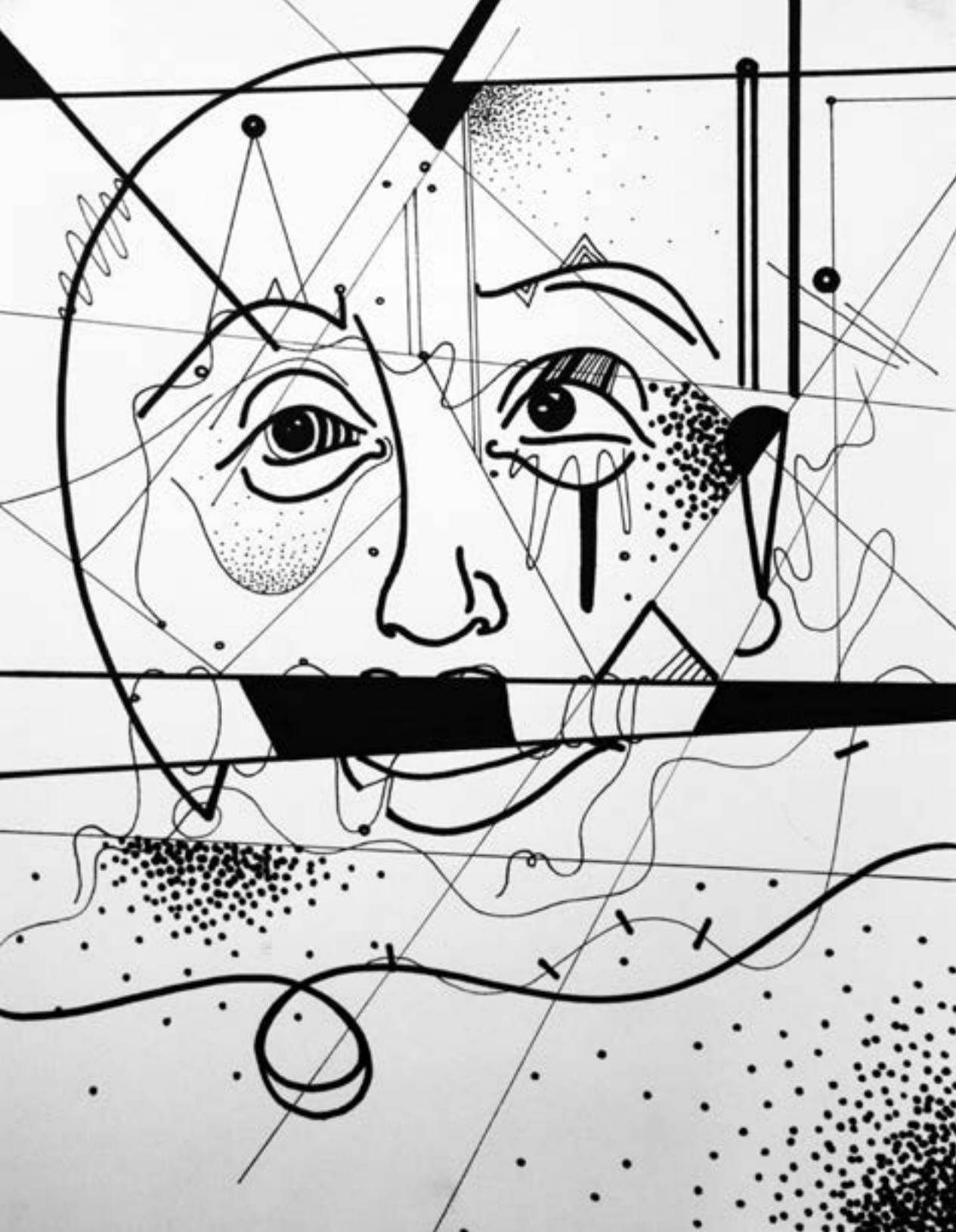
Dinner was a slop of gray matter. Some tasteless slush covered my equally tasteless chicken—or maybe pork. There was also a side of reheated vegetables. *I can recognize it from last night’s meal. My first meal as a free woman is going to be pizza, hot cheesy pizza smothered in grease, ugh! I can’t wait to leave this place.* Moving the substances around on my plate gave me plenty of brain power to question what Ryan wanted to know and to figure out what I was going to say. *Should I tell him the truth? Should I tell him how just a week before I got here I took a razor and artfully slid that blade across my porcelain skin shredding any hope of normalcy. Or should I tell him that my mom pumps me with antidepressants and antipsychotic drugs? Fuck, I am crazy.* I cleared my tray along with my thoughts and decided that I would tell him whatever he wanted to know, no matter what the outcome might be. *Everyone else thinks I’m crazy so what am I to do? What is one to do?*

The center is a large building with four floors separating the kids by levels of craziness. The first floor, the one that everyone sees upon entrance, is painted a calm shade of purple with nice mahogany wooden floors. The decoration is equally as beautiful with its colorful paintings

and sleek furniture giving the level a friendly and happy atmosphere. Accordingly, that floor also houses the mildly unadjusted kids who will only live there temporarily –the hopefuls and the ones that we see when our parents force us to visit before we become exiled. The second floor is where I have had to call home. The walls are an awful yellow and it appears that they were meant to be white but years of built-up anxiety stained them the ugly color. The furnishings are not as nicely kept as the ones downstairs and the cheap paintings on the walls speak volumes for the residents that call this floor home. The other two floors are off limits for anyone that is not required to be there, but I imagine they have a very sterile feel. The upper levels are home to the really crazy kids that cannot be trusted in general population or in rooms without padded walls. *Keep it up and you’ll be clawing at those walls too.*

I make my way from the dining hall in the west wing, passing the nurse’s station, to a cluster of offices in the east wing guarded by a single orderly. There are probably more scrutinizing our every move behind cameras but the fact that there is only one standing guard makes me feel like less of a threat. Ryan’s office door is open as the dim light of his desk lamp leaks out onto the main floor of the office chambers. *Now or Never.* I let out a deep breath and knock.

I startled him. *He was expecting me. Wasn’t*



*Reality*  
Marianna Mello

he? “Come in, come in, sit down here,” he motioned to a big chair that could easily fit a person and a half. ...*And here come the nerves. Breathe. Padded walls. Just breathe.* The chair was pretty comfortable but there was an excess of fabric that pooled together on the sides of the cushions that annoyed me. I began to pluck the pieces off. *Breathe.*

“How are you feeling?”

*How am I feeling? Easy, now make eye contact. They like it when you make eye contact. Crazy people don't do that.* “Fine,” I said as I found his eyes, “I’m fine.”

“Okay, let’s talk about today’s group discussion,” he said as I fidgeted with the clumps of couch fabric that accumulated between my fingers.

“What about it?”

“I think we had a little bit of a break through, don’t you?” Ryan’s question forced an answer out of me as I brushed the pieces to the floor.

“Not really. You asked me why I’m here and I told you. That’s not a break through; that’s common knowledge and if you look at my paperwork I’m sure it’ll tell you that my dad died and my mother sent me here.” Ryan’s face begins to pucker—not as if he ate something sour but more like he was deciding a move in chess.

“True, but the point is that you were able to talk about it.” *Touché, hipster!*

“I can talk about whatever you want to talk about but the truth is that I don’t care. I don’t care one bit to share my stories with you or any of the other people that gawk at me in group. I can talk about it. I just don’t see reason in any of it.”

“Tell me about your father,” he says coolly. *Father? What father? Jeff? I guess he means dad.* I pluck more of the cushion fabric and become grateful for its distraction.

“My dad killed himself when I was thirteen; he hung himself in the basement with electrical wire.” Ryan sat across from me completely motionless and waiting for me to continue. The silence became excruciating. “My dad lived in Robesonia with his new wife and new kids. I guess he messed things up so badly with my mother and me that he needed a new family to make things right. He loved them and I did not hate him for that. No, not for that, in the end he left them too and I hated him for that—just the way he made his exit. He did not change.”

“That makes sense. I can understand why that would make you angry. Is that why you hurt yourself?” *Straight to the good stuff, huh? Breathe. Don't cry.*

Another clump of fluff hits the floor along with a few rogue tears. “I didn’t cut myself because of him. I don’t blame him for any of that. I have so many emotions tied to my dad but ‘hurting’ myself was never associated with him.” My eyes search for something other than

*Mad Face*  
Irving Guzman

Ryan's face, anything else. His bookcase is filled with medical journals and several pieces of literature. A few titles piqued my attention and instantly I would give anything to be in Catherine Earnshaw's shoes right now rather than sit here and watch him become familiar with my story.

"What made you hurt yourself?" *Stop with the "hurt" stuff. I never hurt myself.*

"I didn't hurt myself."

Frustrated, he asks, "What do you call it?"

"Feeling. I never hurt myself. I just began to feel things. Okay?" My hands move from the cushion to my sleeve again. The cuts that scar my arms sting slightly. It has been two weeks and they should have been healed by now but I cannot stop picking at the scabs that form. I need that pain. I need to make sure that I am still alive.

Ryan shifted in his seat and continued with his inquiries: "Your mother told us that you were suicidal. Is that accurate? Is that how you feel?"

*I bet she did say that. That's what she thinks. That's it.* I was not suicidal! I just wanted to feel something. That is the problem with America's youth. Nobody ever lets you feel anything. They pump you full of pills that safeguard your mind and make it near impossible to become comfortable with the darkness. Know what? I did hurt myself. I wanted to hurt because at least it was something. At least I felt alive."

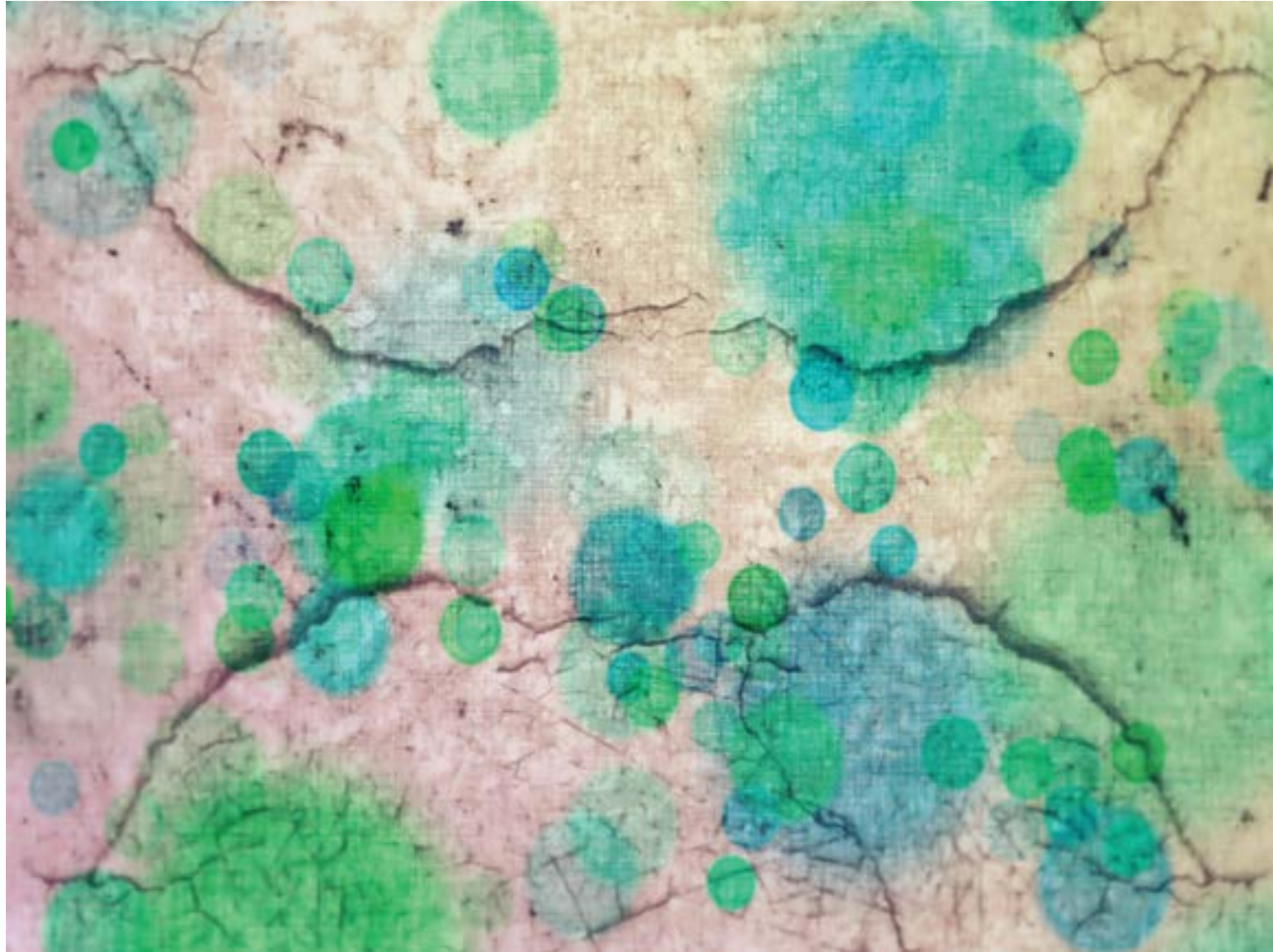
*Stop crying! I can't stop.* I am so fed up with everyone thinking I am crazy. I just wanted to feel alive. "I cut myself because I could feel the sharp edges cutting through me. I was forced to take dozens of pills that cut off any emotion and I was a fucking zombie. I hated it so much but couldn't emote. I was dead long before I started cutting." *Breathe. He thinks I'm crazy. Breathe.*

I am a complete sobbing mess at this point and Ryan is just sitting there watching me fall apart. He gives me a look like he wants to hug me but I know they cannot touch me. I need a hug though. I need something because right now I have nothing. My dad is dead. My mother might as well be and I am sure to be in the padded cell tonight. *Breathe.*

He hands me a small square box of tissues and allows me a few moments to collect myself. I just want to go to bed but I know he will want to know more. I pull a tissue and blot my puffy face. Everything feels sensitive and swollen. *You look great. Just like a crazy person.* "Could I step out for a drink?" Ryan moves from his seat and makes his way to a compact refrigerator near his desk. He grabs two sodas and shuts the door.

"Sprite or Coke?" he questions as he holds my options in his hands.

"Sprite." He offers the beverage as he settles back into his seat. We both crack open our drinks and take sips. The contents burn my



mouth with its fizz as I swish the cold liquid around before I swallow. *Ahh*. I think I like Ryan. He seems different.

Ryan begins the conversation again: “I know this is difficult.” A smug laugh escapes my lips as he speaks. “But I think we should continue, if that’s okay with you?”

I readjust myself and take another sip of my Sprite. “I guess. I’m still here.” Ryan begins to pull out a prescription pad as he asks another question about my sanity. *What the hell is he doing? No, no, no, no!* I can’t process the words he uttered and I feel betrayed. *I need to get out of here*. His pen moves across the pad but pauses to await my response for the question that I did not quite hear. He said something about home. “Excuse me?” *I trusted you*.

“Tell me about your life at home,” he asks and continues to scrawl something surely unpleasant on that prescription pad.

“What are you writing?” My blood is boiling beneath my pale skin. I told him things that I could never tell anyone before. I trusted him with the knowledge in hopes that he would save me. I was wrong.

He answers as he tears the paper from the pad: “I think we should start you on a dose of Lexapro and Geodon. The Lexapro will help with—” In that instance, I snapped and remembered what rage felt like. I have been angry before. I am angry that I am alone in this world, but there is a difference in feeling

anger and feeling rage. This was rage. I threw my soda at him as I leapt out of my seat. He was not able to act quickly enough before I shoved the chair in his direction with all the force I could muster. I had seconds to make my way to the door before he could reach me and then I would be free of this room. *What the hell are you going to do? Shit. Shit. Shit*. My mind was racing as I tried to escape until I realized that there was nowhere to go. I could leave the room but that would not change the fact that I was still locked in this concrete building.

My body shut down and I fell limp to the ground. Ryan stood over top of me, dripping wet and bewildered, and called for the orderly to detain me. As I suspected, the single orderly on guard was no longer alone and was now flanked by two others. I was dead weight in their able arms as one of them effortlessly scooped me up from the floor. I could not tell which one was carrying me. All I know is he also held me as one of the others pricked me with a needle. *Padded rooms. Breathe in. Breathe out. Just breathe*.

The sun poured itself into my room and the warmth it held on my cheek brought me to consciousness. I woke up in a daze not entirely sure that last night occurred until a short moment passed and I realized where I was. I tried to move from the bed but there were soft bands bound to my legs and wrists. *Oh no, I can’t be here. No, wake up; this is a dream!*

*Wake up!* Moisture filled my eyes to the brim and began to pour down my cheeks and into my ears. I was no longer on the second floor of Southgate Youth Center. “Please let me go! Please! I promise I won’t act out! Please!” I continued to holler until two orderlies opened the door to my cell and came to my bedside. They were all big, not fat, but bulky, and their presence filled the small room. One of them with the nametag, Steve, looked so young that he could barely be older than I am, while the other one, Clark, had to be in his late forties. They looked at me like I used to stare at the really crazy people waiting for them to turn at any moment. I was unstable in their ever shifting eyes. *They think I’m damaged*.

Steve nervously watches my every move as Clark undoes my bonds and grants me freedom from the bed. I laugh at the fact that there are two of them here. I’m 5 feet short and all but 110 lbs; they have nothing to worry about. *It’s because you’re crazy. Shut up*. “Thank you!” comes out of my mouth pathetically and they both nod in acceptance. I am being watched like a hawk as I move around my new home and acquaint myself with the surroundings. The room is not padded like I expected. I must be on the third floor and it gives me a little hope. The yellow color of the walls reminds me of every foul thing I have encountered. There is a small window in the room that overlooks the garden in the rear of the building and there

are a few kids lounging and enjoying the sunny day. They must be the patients from the first floor because I was never allowed outside like that. In fact, I had completely forgotten of the garden’s existence. *I wish I was one of them. I’d kill to be out there*.

A male nurse comes into my room with two small white cups, one filled with all the prescription pills that will make me a zombie again and the other with water. I do not want to acknowledge him. I just want to watch the people living outside of these walls. They look so happy.

“I need to check your wristband,” the nurse spits out as he grabs my arm and I hate him already. “Okay, Miss, I need you to take these and I’ll be back at three o’clock for your next dose,” he said clearly irritated that I still have not taken my pills.

“What are these?” I question the offending nurse.

“The white small one is Lexapro, the long blue one is Geodon and the other white one is Wellbutrin. They help with your condition,” he states impatiently and I know I have no choice but to take them. I take the prescriptions from him and toss the contents in my mouth and chase the pills with the water. “Open your mouth, please.” *You’re kidding me*. I do as I am told and he briefly inspects me for any remnants of the drugs. “Okay, I’ll see you again at three.” He nods to the orderlies as he exits

my small room. The orderlies are still there and that makes me nervous. *Why are they still here? Don't worry. In a minute you won't feel a damn thing.*

"Let's go," Clark says in a very stern voice. He has zero tolerance for crazy people like me. He grabs my arm and escorts me out of my room and onto the main floor of what I presume to be the third floor. I was right; the atmosphere on this floor is sterile. The walls are white and the floors are covered with white tiles with dark flecks. Unlike the second floor, where people would still be in common areas, only orderlies and nurses were in sight, shuffling past one another, opening and closing patient doors. Clark, Steve, and I enter what appears to be a shower room and Steve grabs a small stack of towels from a neatly folded pile by the entrance.

On the second level, our showers were held in a large room with spacious partitions and we were allowed to go in and out of the shower room as we pleased but that is not the case for this level. Steve hands me the towels and then grabs hotel sized toiletries for me. I can feel the drugs taking effect as I begin to lose myself in a haze. I am directed towards a large open room with enough shower heads to bathe twenty people at once. Something in Clark's posture suggests that he will not be moving anytime soon and all I want to do is cry but I cannot. It is hard to explain. My brain says that I should be crying right now but I cannot

feel anything. I am then stripped down and my things are placed in a small locker by the place where Steve continues to stand watching. *This is embarrassing, but I belong here. I'm crazy now.* Clark adjusts the water temperature for me, checking every so often to make sure that I will not burn myself. I step into the warm stream and let the water pour over my body. I am completely broken and, even though Clark is there next to me in his white scrubs and black Crocs, I am alone.

I let the water wash away my sanity and I am no longer the person I was the day before. Clark turns the water off when I am finished and allows me minimal privacy to dry off and put on a fresh set of clothing. It's not my clothing; it is the hospital clothing—the kind that a crazy person wears. There is a large mirror, a surprising find, that hangs over several sinks and I stare into it as I brush my teeth with the brush and toothpaste provided by Clark. I stare at the person in the reflection and I cannot recognize her. She looks like she was happy once. *Who are you?* I raise my free hand to the mirror to touch her face and comfort her. She looks like she needs that. I catch a glimpse of the name on her wristband. Ariel! That is a pretty name. I bet someone that loved her very much named her such a pretty name. I hope she is happy again one day soon. The orderly calls for my attention and I am directed out of the room. I wave good bye at the girl in the mirror: "Goodbye, Ariel."



## Rearview Mirror

*Joshua Colon*

In the early hours of the day,  
The cold, November breeze has awakened me  
While I breathe its frosty air into my lungs.  
I don't know where I am going,  
And there is no way of knowing  
Of when I will get there,  
But I do know that for some reason, I am out here.  
I gaze into my rearview mirror  
And see the dark road from where I came.

It's November 1,  
And this date is the only date  
That I can recall every event of the day,  
Every year.  
His final words still ring in my ear,  
Every morning when I wake  
And every night when I sleep.  
He saw a light in me that had yet to be discovered.  
A light that would not be easy to reach,  
But a light that was solely meant for me.  
Were those words, which he declared  
Through his final ounces of strength,  
Meant to be his final words to me?  
Or did they weigh heavy on his mind the entire  
time?

The shriek of my mother, when she heard of his  
demise,  
Still chills me to the core.  
Her father, her rock, her first love,  
Was with her no more.  
It was a feeling that I desired to never witness  
again,  
But it was a feeling that I was forced to face again  
Just a few months later,  
When she, like her father, was infected.  
When a son watches his mother corrode, the site  
alone  
Has the power to change the will of any man,  
Young or old.  
But as a child, the devastation altered my mind.  
Innocent priorities converted to selfless duties,  
Childhood made the transformation  
Into adulthood, in a heartbeat.  
Her display of strength, faith and courage during  
that fight  
Motivate me every day.  
As she spit in the face of that cancer,  
We laughed together as it ran away  
With its tail between its legs.  
And it was at that moment,  
That I laughed the heartiest laugh of my life.

I think of all this on my drive and it forces me to  
ponder,  
Causing me to look at the road behind me in a new  
way.

Now I am seeing two different roads  
That I have traveled  
During my time on this journey.  
The first road  
Was straight and wide,  
Filled with fun and exciting stops along the way.  
From learning the basic guides to travel,  
To pulling over and admiring the view,  
My time on that road was carefree.  
When all of a sudden,  
I hit that first bump on the second road  
Driving at full speed,  
And lost my tour guide.  
Out of nowhere,  
The straightforward road that I had come to know  
Was nothing but a dot in my mirror.  
And the signs on the road ahead,  
Only said Detour.  
During my time on that second road,  
I lost countless guides to the sands of time.  
All of which were family, best friends, and  
mentors;  
Each unique in their own way,  
Each one fighting their own battle  
With their own families left behind when their  
journey was done.  
I think of all this, on November 1,  
Years after my first guide departed,

And the only feeling that I can sense  
Is one of assurance.

I have always been told that it is darkest just before  
the dawn,  
And as I drive down this road  
In the early hours of the morning,  
I notice the sun rising in the distance.  
It's at this moment when I calmly reach for my  
shades,  
Grip the wheel and turn up the radio,  
Playing that old Spanish tune that he used to sing.  
And I can hear him whisper softly ,  
"Es un nuevo día y una nueva luz"  
For it is a new day, and in this new light  
A new road appears.  
I look in the rearview mirror,  
And I catch a glimpse of my assurance,  
Flowing through my smile.  
The smile that pushed me through  
The tribulations and the trials.  
The same smile that comforted mamá  
In her hour of need.  
As I open the windows to let the cold air in,  
I come alive.  
The sun has risen fully now,  
And the road seems brighter than ever before.  
So I decide to increase my speed,  
Leaning into every sharp turn,  
I notice that my road is lined, once again,  
With the imagination that fueled me  
At the beginning of my drive.



*Fine Hair*  
Shelby Heckman

## **Crimson**

*Nicole Gausch*

Still.  
Quiet.  
Fixated.  
Struggling not to move too,  
Suddenly—  
Crimson  
Flashes in her eyes.  
Blurring.  
Focusing.  
Anticipating.  
The final snap—  
Of the shutter as it,  
Captures  
The cardinal's flight.

## **Deceased Light**

*Catherine J. Mahony*

She uplifts me on the wings of sparrows,  
Circling in times of sorrow.  
She dries my tears with cool winter winds,  
Gusting in times of despair.

She sings to me in white noise,  
In between the notes of her favorite song.  
She whispers to me through my child's laughter,  
Assuring me I am a good mother.

She visits me in sweet aromas,  
Memories entwined in a familiar fragrance.  
She pulls me to my feet after I crumble,  
With a penetrating will to persevere.

She dwells in the constellations,  
Manifestations of deceased light still radiant with visibility.  
She resides eternally within me,  
Her name and legacy I possess.

*Happiness*  
Alexandra Fotache



## “You must be Madison”

*Crystal McCalicher*

The day started off just like any other for Madison. The air was crisp and the leaves were finally starting to change colors. She had just finished her tour at an historic insane asylum that closed down years ago for abusing their patients. She had been giving this tour for the past five years and absolutely loved it. Something about this campus felt like home to her, but she could never explain why.

The asylum was located in Gorham, Maine, a twenty-minute drive outside of Portland. It looked, however, as if it was located in the middle of nowhere. Huge oak trees surrounded the entire campus and a ride to anywhere took at least ten minutes. After she finished her shift, Madison decided to go outside for some peace and quiet—to her favorite spot at the asylum, located on top of the administration building in the bell tower. She loved being able to see all the decaying buildings that were once full of life. The shutters were now barely hanging by the hinges, most of the windows had been blasted out, and most of the roofs were caving in. But to Madison, the sight was gorgeous because these decaying walls told a story like no

other. As she sat there, she wondered what had happened in those walls that this asylum was left abandoned with not a single soul looking back. Madison knew she would never see it in its prime—back when it was open. If only she could go back in time, she thought. There was just something that hypnotized Madison to go back to this historic campus every day. After all, it felt like home to her.

While deep in her thoughts, Madison heard what sounded like people whispering. She could have sworn they were talking about her, but there was not supposed to be another person around for miles. Scared out of her mind, Madison quickly whipped her head around in the direction she heard the talking. She waited a few minutes, but heard nothing but the sound of birds chirping and the leaves shifting in the wind. She figured it must have been an owl or some other animal in the woods. She hoped so anyway because it was a long walk home for her.

After an hour or two in the bell tower, Madison started getting chilly and finally decided it was time to leave. All she was wearing

was her long white dress that she was forced to wear for her job, so the wind started becoming too much for her. As she neared the bottom of the ladder, she suddenly felt a really hard thump on the back of her head, almost knocking her unconscious. She felt her body land on the ground and the room started spinning. As her sight was going in and out of focus, she saw a large silhouette of a man standing over her. Just as she was about to scream for help, everything went black.

Finally opening her eyes, all Madison could see was complete darkness. She finally started regaining consciousness and began to feel around for anything. The last thing she remembered was sitting in the bell tower and somehow waking up in this unfamiliar room. As her eyes finally adjusted to the darkness, she saw an old mattress next to her. “This looks like a broom closet,” she thought. Madison figured she could not have been far from the bell tower. She assumed her co-workers were playing a trick on her, but she did not know anyone that juvenile. The more conscious she became and the longer she remained in that closet, the more anxious she became. Her head started throbbing, sweat started pouring from her forehead, her hands and knees shaky and suddenly, she was not able to breathe. She grabbed her chest as if that would help, and started swaying back and forth, hoping to wake up from this weird dream.

“There you are dear. We’ve been looking everywhere for you,” Madison heard. She thought maybe it was just a dream, but she uncurled herself from her fetal like position and saw a woman kneeling right in front of her. She looked like an angel with long white hair, a plump, round body who dressed in all white.

“Where am I? I don’t know where I am,” Madison said.

“Oh, don’t worry dear. Everything will be alright,” the woman said. “We just need to get you out of those dirty clothes—and a warm meal. Would you like that?”

Madison hesitated, not knowing whether to trust this overly happy woman or not, but the hunger rumbling in her stomach outweighed any other thought she had. She vigorously shook her head and the woman stepped out of the room. She had no idea how long she had been in those clothes. She instantly felt a little better now that this woman was here to help her.

The woman returned shortly with a rickety looking wheelchair. Madison thought she was going to fall right through it the second she took a seat. She turned her head and saw the woman’s name badge that said “Claire.” Hopefully, Claire could answer all these questions spinning in her head. She seemed nice enough.

“Excuse me, Claire, is it? This may sound like a dumb question, but where exactly am





*Puzzled*  
Mariana Mello

I?” Madison said as she was trying to get comfortable in this god awful wheelchair that she did not need anyway.

“You’re home, dear. I know you are a bit confused. You really hit your head hard this time. You poor thing,” Claire said.

“No, you are mistaken. I’m not home.” The further Claire wheeled Madison through the building, the more familiar it looked. Everything from the arch in the doorway, the wallpaper on the walls, even the small green flowers on the tiles of the floor all looked familiar. Suddenly, Madison had a heavy sinking feeling in her chest again. She had been here before. She knew this area like the back of her hand, but only this time everything looked newer and much, much cleaner.

“No, there’s no possible way. I cannot really be here,” Madison thought. As she shuffled in her wheelchair, she found a newspaper sitting on a passing chair. She quickly picked it up and the date read October 16, 1959. Her fears were instantly confirmed. She was in the insane asylum she worked at, but this time she was in a different era. She was no longer a tour guide; she was now a patient.

“Claire,” Madison yelled, “you need to let me go. I don’t belong here.”

“Well, of course, you do, dear. You’ve been here for over five years now,” Claire calmly said, continuing to look straight ahead to some unknown destination to Madison.

“No, you don’t understand. I am not a patient here. I am a tour guide. I need to leave now.”

“Oh, child, you and your stories. You are never leaving here,” Claire said. “This is home now.”

When Madison envisioned seeing this asylum up and running, she did not envision being one of the actual patients. Instead, she had thoughts of interviewing the staff that were a part of this historic campus and finding out the truths about some of the awful lies and rumors that surrounded this place. She was back in the prime of this campus, but they did not believe she was a tour guide. They thought she was an actual patient with mental issues. As she tried to process what was going on, Madison instantly went limp and passed out in her wheel chair.

Finally awakening to the sound of blood curdling screams, Madison still found herself in the uncomfortable wheelchair in the corner of what looked like a living area with no windows. She found a television to her left, hard and dirty couches that looked like cement to her right, a hallway right in front of her leading to what looked like bedrooms and at least twenty other patients in an area that was no bigger than a classroom. Some were sleeping in their chairs or playing quietly by themselves, but most were making that same awful scream over and over again. Some patients were only dressed

with a diaper, covered in their own feces, and others were banging their heads against the wall while others were pacing around the room frantically. None of them looked older than Madison. In fact, they all looked to be about twelve or thirteen. Madison frantically looked around for a nurse in the sea of patients and when she finally spotted one, the nurse was hurrying around the room trying to aid all of these helpless patients. Unfortunately, the one nurse alone could not do everything. She then heard a louder scream coming from one of the bedrooms. Seconds later a second nurse, no older than twenty five, came running to the nurses' station clutching her right arm. She immediately got on the phone.

"Yeah, I need you to come to floor 2, section 4 immediately. That son of a bitch bit me again.....yeah, that one. This time he's going to the dentist's chair. Have Doctor Newman rip his teeth out. That will teach him."

Seconds later, three large orderlies came rushing through the living area, down the hall, and entered the bedroom the nurse just came out of. Before Madison could even process what was happening, the young boy was being dragged down the hall and out through the living area, kicking and screaming until

Madison could no longer hear him. Just as Madison was about to make a run for it out of this god forsaken place, she felt a cold hand touch her arm.

"I wouldn't try it if I were you," said a young voice.

Madison looked at the hand touching her arm and then up at the boy who was touching it. She did not even know he was sitting there. "Try what? I don't know what you're talking about," Madison said.

"Trust me. I've been here most of my life. I used to have that same look in my eyes."

"What? I don't know what you are talking about," said Madison.

"Yes, you do. The name's Charlie. You must be Madison. Yeah, I heard about you. You're the tour guide, right? Funny story if you ask me. Did you really think this place would ever close down? Places like this never die. They are made to trap people like us forever, away from so-called society so they never have to deal with us. As long as there are people like you and me, there are going to be places like this," Charlie said. He seemed about Madison's age, but somehow looked older. He had jet black shaggy hair that looked like a bird's nest. He smelled as if he had not showered in over a week and

his dark brown eyes could tell the stories of a man who lived 100 lives, yet Charlie was only twenty two.

"Yes, it is closed. I know it is. I work here or I did anyway. I'm not too sure. The last thing I remember was being in the bell tower and then I ended up in a closet somewhere."

Charlie let out a subtle laugh followed by a long cough. "Well, now I know you're lying. There is only one person allowed in the bell tower and that is not you. He is an evil man that goes by King. He usually works in the building next to this one, so you have nothing to worry about, but still, he's the only one with keys to get up there."

"If you don't mind me asking," Madison said, "how did you end up in here?"

"It's probably better you don't know. Let's just say, I don't mix well with others."

"Okay, Charlie, is it? I don't really care what you did. All I know is that I need to get out of here, back to 2013. This is not my time. Can you please tell me how to get out of here?"

"Alright, sweetheart. Since you sound pathetic and look scared enough, I'll tell you what to do. Tonight, after Claire does her final head count and goes into her office, you need to get to the administration building. I'll have one of my friends meet you in the records office. He is clinically insane, but claims he knows voodoo or something like that bullshit. I don't know, but if anyone, he can get you back to

your beloved 2013."

Later that night, after Claire did her head count, Madison leaped out of bed and found Claire locked in her office looking down at her mountain of paperwork of today's accident reports. Madison knew this was her chance and made her way off to the administration building. She worked here for so long that she knew the place like the back of her hand. First, she had to make her way to the underground tunnels to get to the Administration building. Walking across the yard was out of the question because there was too much security out at this time. She made her way to the hallway, looked left, looked right, and saw no one. Quickly, she dashed down the hallway, down the stairs and into the tunnels. This was the easy part. No nurse or doctor dared to go into the tunnels after dark and for good reason. With only a few flickering lights to see, Madison was practically blind and freezing. The worse part was the overwhelming feeling of being watched. "Maybe that's just my paranoia kicking in," Madison thought. After a few agonizing minutes running through the tunnels, Madison finally found the stairwell that said administration building. Now all she had to do was get to the records office. Finding it was not the hard part; it was dodging all the nurses and security that was an issue. However, being the short, slim girl Madison was, she had no problem hiding in small dark areas when she saw someone coming.

Eventually, Madison found herself standing right in front of the records office. She paused for just a brief moment, contemplating everything that happened to her that day. She finally got her life-long wish to be at this asylum while it was opened, but under the wrong circumstances. She never stopped to think what this place was really like. Charlie was right; this place was meant to lock people away from normal society so they did not have to think about them ever again and move on with their lives. Madison wanted to leave this whole experience behind and forget all about it. She finally managed to get enough courage to turn the knob to open the door to meet this man that was going to get her home. She slowly opened the door and found no one inside. She stopped and looked around; still no one. She found nothing but a manila envelope on top of a desk with her name on the front. "I guess this guy was already here," Madison thought. Very slowly, she decided to pick up the envelope and look at the contents inside when a note fell out on the floor. She picked it up and it read:

Madison, this envelope will contain all the answers to the questions you have. You may not like them, but at least you will know once and for all. And like I said, this place will never die. Sincerely, Charlie.

"What is that supposed to mean?" Madison thought. Now she was even more confused, but she wanted to get home and if looking at what

this envelope had inside would get her home, she was going to do it. She looked at the first sheet which had all her basic information, except it was all wrong. The sheet said her date of birth was June 18, 1931, but that wasn't right; it was June 18, 1991. "Probably just a typo," Madison thought. She figured these secretaries had no idea how to use typewriters and just made a mistake. She kept skimming through everything until she came to the doctor's notes. She thought these were the answers she was looking for:

Patient suffers being a Paranoid Schizophrenic with violent behavior and auditory hallucinations. Her father left her as a child and her mother was an abusive alcoholic. The patient was left undiagnosed until seventeen years of age when she killed her mother believing that she was trying to poison her. She has constant delusions of time travel. She constantly thinks she is living an alternate life as another person. This is because her mental state wants to escape the reality of her childhood.

Madison could not move. She realized that she was never in 2013. She had been a patient here the whole time and never knew it. She was never a normal teenager who loved to explore old historic buildings. She kept telling herself that she was in 2013 and that she did have another life outside of here in a different time.

She was never willing to accept that she was clinically insane.

A few moments later, two orderlies knocked down the door, dragging Madison through the hallway as she fought them every step of the way. The orderlies were finally able to strap her in a chair down the hall when Claire walked through the door.

"You were not supposed to read that Madison. It is no good for your condition," Claire said as she prepared a needle.

"But I'm not crazy, I told you. I don't belong here," Madison screamed.

"Darling, I know you can read and you saw your diagnosis. I've told you, you have lived here for five years now. You are never allowed to leave here. It is not safe for the public." Just as Claire said that, Madison saw the needle slide into her arm.

"I'm not crazy, I'm not crazy," Madison continued to repeat until she could no longer keep her eyes open any longer. She was to forever remain in this asylum she once so desperately wanted to be a part of.

*Zombie Hand*  
Shelby Heckman





*Abstraction*  
Victoria Miller

## Comet

*Gilberto Diaz*

My trail blazes-----  
Dazzling,  
Across dark skies,  
And from measureless heights  
I was entranced,  
By the beauty reflected  
In the gaze of your eyes,  
As you beheld my form  
Moving powerfully,  
Through the void of space.

Journeying,  
Long and desolate,  
Never seeing others of my kind and  
After theories of relativity,  
I was pulled off course violently  
Into your tugging gravity.

Isotopes and radiant ions  
Exploded from our collisions and  
As I entered the deep center  
Of your body's orbit,  
We created new laws of physics-  
Our forces make new realities of being.

But now,  
I burn  
Too bright-too hot,  
You feel that my passion,

Overheats the temperatures  
Of all the rooms I step into,  
And that other people's energies  
Are now my fuel.

Don't you know,  
That I would eat the planets  
Of the universe  
If I could,  
And turn them into jewels for you...?  
If I could...  
I would.

Should I,  
Dim my brilliance,  
And my spirit's natural splendor,  
So that you can be secure,  
That my light shines  
Only for you,  
As I become a useless ember?

Sometimes,  
Parts of me,  
Feel,  
As if,  
They're slowly dying,  
Flying away as dust  
Into the cosmos  
Before my time

## Older Workers: Separating Myths from Facts

*Roxanne Peters*

Picture this, if you will: Two men in their forties are having a beer in their favorite watering hole. The man on the right, with receding hairline and glasses, asks the paunchy man seated next to him, “How’s the job hunt going?” His friend replies, “Not Good. It’s pretty hard to hunt something that’s extinct” (Wise and Aldrich, E8). This scene is fictional and unfolds in a comic strip; yet sadly it has become part of everyday life for many “older” people who are looking for work in today’s tough job market. Their resumes showing years of valuable on-the-job experience are rejected, invitations to interview are rare, and offers for jobs equivalent to the ones they lost are virtually extinct. Although the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) placed older workers, categorized as those over age forty, in a protected class similar to women and ethnic minorities, bias against older workers not only exists in the hiring practices of contemporary businesses, it prevails.

I am in my late fifties and I know that I will be losing my job in the not-too-distant future; so admittedly, I have a vested interest in this

subject. In the past four weeks, I have submitted fifteen resumes in response to classified ads for a person with my skill set. I have crafted original, personalized cover letters to send with each application with just one constant: I discreetly mention that I have twenty seven years of on-the-job experience with word processing and spreadsheet software, indicating that I have to be at least forty five years old. To date, the vast majority of potential employers have not contacted me. I have received only a scant few automated email acknowledgements of receipt and only one call-back. I had to jump through hoops to schedule an interview with this company. I am beginning to smell the proverbial rat!

I grew up in a blue-collar, working class neighborhood where all the dads had steady jobs in one of the many mills, foundries, or factories that dotted the Berks County landscape. The Parkers, a retired couple down the street, were revered. They were the smartest, wisest people I knew. But fifty years later, the tables have turned: middle-aged workers are laid off from positions they have held for years and they

are unable to find new jobs. Older people are no longer revered for their wisdom; they are viewed as slow, uncooperative, and incapable of learning new skills. How did everything change so radically in so short a time?

In “Managing the Older Worker,” authors Peter Cappelli and Bill Novelli label the post-World War II “baby boom” era (1946 to 1964) the “traditional retirement model.” Companies hired “entry-level” workers and invested in training them. Worker productivity and performance grew with experience and careers were advanced in-house by climbing “up the ladder.” Unions were strong and collective bargaining agreements were based on “seniority,” ensuring workers had jobs with the company until they retired at the (generally mandatory) age of sixty five. A life-time career was important to both employee and employer. Retirement plans were based on tenure. Before the ADEA, it was legal to discriminate against older workers in the hiring process, so employees were highly incentivized to stay with one company for life. Employers wanted to retain employees to recoup investment in training. Management could better plan for the long term when workforce succession was predictable (46-48).

However, this traditional “lifetime career” model, as Cappelli and Novelli point out, is now “dead.” During the 1981 recession, employers were forced to “adapt or fail” and changed their

approach to human resource management. In this new business model which the authors dub “the contemporary scene,” employers discovered they could save money by “downsizing,” that is, by eliminating workers from the workforce. By the 1980s, labor unions had lost much of their potency, and companies could more freely break the “life-time employment agreement” that seniority guaranteed and save money on pension plans by laying off older workers. When the economy recovered, companies could quickly hire younger workers with “new competencies” and rebuild by “bringing in new employees from the outside . . . at lower wages” (50-52). Even today, “the extent of outside hiring . . . is quite large: almost 3 percent of the U.S. workforce now changes employment every month, [which equates to] roughly a third of the workforce changing jobs each year” (52). Cappelli and Novelli state that due to this high rate of employee turnover, roughly 40% of the U.S. workforce has been with their current employer for less than two years (54).

While these statistics may sound like good news for a job seeker, they are of no comfort to an older American looking for a full-time job, especially in our current post-recessionary era. When the economy is weak, employers can afford to pick and choose who they hire, and older workers are not returning to the workforce at same rate as their younger counterparts. According to Nathaniel Reade

of AARP, formerly the American Association of Retired Persons, “50-plus workers . . . face brutal odds if they lose their jobs.” Citing a 2012 Pew research study, AARP reports that even though the overall unemployment rate is lower for older people, a worker over age fifty five who loses his or her job will be jobless for a longer period of time. Forty-four percent can count on being unemployed for over a year. The odds are worse for laid-off workers over age sixty two. Half of these job seekers will drop out of the workforce completely (Reade, “Surprising Truth” 1).

In order to make money and remain competitive in today’s economy, businesses must analyze the costs and benefits of employing workers. In “Layoffs and Unemployment Discrimination: A New Stigma,” authors Ronald Karren and Kim Sherman detail a method that human resources personnel use to “categorize applicants and try to screen out those who are unsuitable for the job and/or the organization” (853). Karren and Sherman refer to this process as “heuristic theory” in which the “rules of intuitive judgment . . . reduce complex decision making to simpler more efficient shortcuts” (850). To assure that they select the ideal person to fill a position, interviewers frequently use an “anchoring heuristic” whereby resumes are reviewed to glean “a first impression” of a job candidate before ever actually meeting him or her (850). This “first impression bias” shapes the

direction of the interview, influences the types of questions asked at the interview, and affects the post-interview rating of the candidate (853). Karren and Sherman argue that older applicants begin the interview process already “stigmatized” by “differential attitudes” toward and “negative stereotypes” of older workers (855).

In the recent recession, workers were laid off in droves as businesses downsized their workforces to adjust for economic conditions and remain competitive. However, as Karren and Sherman explain, companies also use layoffs as a method of ridding their workforces of poor performers and workers who “do not fit” (848-49). Since human resources personnel know that organizations use layoffs to purge undesirable employees, unemployed persons often begin the interview process already stigmatized—the interviewer has “raised concerns” about that applicant’s productivity and work ethic (856). Thus, Karren and Sherman conclude, older, unemployed workers suffer from a “double stigma” stating, “If older workers are generally stereotyped as less competent and more difficult to train, then unemployed older workers are likely to have a more difficult time gaining employment” (855-56).

In “A Generation Lost: The Reality of Age Discrimination in Today’s Hiring Practices,” authors Thomas H. Butler and Beth A. Berret

write that even the best intentioned employers could be committing acts of discrimination in their human resources practices (6). Some of my older friends looking for jobs have had interviewers tell them, “You are overqualified for the job.” Butler and Berret consider this refrain to be discriminatory because it presumes that an older worker with a great deal of experience will become bored or will leave when a better opportunity arrives. “Possessing skills and abilities that surpass the requirements of a job,” they argue, “cannot and should not be used as the primary means of denying employment to an otherwise qualified candidate” (6-7). Butler and Berret also feel that the online job application is often discriminatory and I agree. In my personal experience with completing this type of application, I have yet to encounter one in which disclosing dates of former employment is not a requisite to submitting the application. As Butler and Berret put it, “There is no way around this requirement . . . an applicant has disclosed that they are most likely over the age of 40” (7).

Cappelli and Novelli examine the age biases that influence decisions made in the hiring process and identify a number of “myths” that abound about the aptitudes and attitudes of older workers (21-44). The most prevalent myth centers on job performance and weighs older workers’ contributions against the costs of employing them. If older workers are perceived

as less productive than younger workers, they are viewed to be more costly to employ (26). A number of studies have been conducted on this subject, including many indicating that age does indeed have a negative effect on worker productivity. Most of this research, however, has been performed in laboratory settings and tends to focus on that which is easiest to apply—the study of “fluid” abilities or “working memory,” i.e. the cognitive abilities that peak in our twenties and then slowly decline (30-34). Cappelli and Novelli believe that “working memory is almost never the only or even most important factor involved in executing work-based tasks” (31). They argue that today’s jobs are much different: jobs are more customer-based, and productivity is measured by ‘how many widgets . . . you turn out per hour,’ which is a less common factor of job performance in present times than it was in the ‘industrial era’ (26-28).

Cappelli and Novelli propose, instead, that we focus on workers’ “crystallized” abilities, i.e. the day-to-day knowledge, skill, and ability acquired over time, and they ask readers to consider this scenario: We would never go to a hospital and ask for the oldest doctor, but we would certainly want to be treated by the most experienced one. Believing experience and skill to be “relevant factors [that] may actually improve with age,” Cappelli and Novelli cite a study that found “more experienced pilots

performed considerably better in actually executing . . . commands [from air traffic controllers]” (28-33). Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger, III, is a perfect example of this contention. On January 15, 2009 after his jet’s engines lost power, Captain Sullenberger successfully ditched US Air Flight1549 into the Hudson River avoiding a crash and saving the lives of all 155 people on board. In a CBS news interview, he told anchorwoman Katie Couric: “One way of looking at this, might be that for 42 years, I’ve been making small, regular deposits in this bank of experience: education and training. And on January 15 the balance was sufficient so that I could make a very large withdrawal” (Reade, “Wisdom” 52).

In their meta-analysis, “The Relationship of Age to Ten Dimensions of Job Performance,” Thomas W. H. Ng and Daniel C. Feldman determine that previous studies of older workers’ abilities were focused too narrowly on productivity or “core task performance,” i.e. “the effectiveness with which . . . workers perform activities that contribute to the organization’s technical core” (395). They list nine other job behaviors that contribute

to performance. These nine behaviors are separated into two broad categories identified as “citizenship behaviors” and “minimum performance behaviors.” Citizenship behaviors are defined as those voluntary deeds performed by workers that are “over and above their core task requirements” and serve “to promote and strengthen the company’s effectiveness, support the broader environment,” and “benefit group and organizational productivity.” On the other hand, minimum performance behaviors, “those [behaviors] that employees have to engage in (like attending work) . . . to keep their jobs,” include “general counterproductive work behaviors, workplace aggression, on-the-job substance use, tardiness, and absenteeism” (Ng and Feldman 395). Counterproductive behaviors are described as “intentional acts that harm the organization’s legitimate business interests,” such as theft, disobedience, gossip, and use of inappropriate language (395-96).

Ng and Feldman’s meta-analysis shows that “age was largely unrelated to core task performance” and had no significant relationship to creativity. Although the study found older workers performed “slightly lower” in training programs and had a slightly higher

percentage of workplace injuries, older workers were found to be more “compliant with safety rules and procedures” (400). In addition, when the relationship between citizenship behaviors and age was measured, older workers enjoyed a “significant and positive” advantage over their younger counterparts. Finally, with the exception of a “weak positive” relationship between age and absenteeism (due to illness), Ng and Feldman determined that older workers engaged in less of the other minimum performance behaviors: counterproductive work behavior, aggression, substance abuse, tardiness, and absenteeism (not related to illness) (400-402). In summary, the results of the Ng and Feldman meta-analysis “support the proposition that older workers contribute effectively to noncore domains of job performance” (403).

The second myth challenged by Cappelli and Novelli is “the belief that [older workers] are not as adaptable to new circumstances and job requirements as their younger peers,” and some lab-based research supports this conclusion. Cappelli and Novelli contend, however, that this type of research only tests working memory and corresponds to “taking timed SAT tests every day, changing the questions each time” (33). They believe that math-based research determines only that “it takes longer for older workers to become proficient at new tasks,” and they maintain that “additional [on-

the-job] experience can offset the effects of age.” On tests not math-related, age was not a “predictor of successful performance,” at all—*experience* was. In fact, Cappelli and Novelli consider older workers to have the advantage over their younger coworkers in many “novel” problem solving situations simply by the virtue of being “much more likely to have seen or experienced something similar before” (34). While agreeing that it may take slightly longer for an older individual to learn a new job, Cappelli and Novelli believe that if businesses prefer to hire employees with job-related experience rather than train them, then in the long run, it makes sense to hire the applicant with far more crystallized knowledge (35).

Although I fully understand how math-based research leads to the conclusion that older workers have less “fluid ability” and “working memory” (Cappelli and Novelli 30-34) or score lower in “core task performance” (Ng and Feldman 395), I entirely agree with the authors’ conclusion that age-related job experience should trump the ability to complete a task more quickly. In my experience, most employers prefer quality performance over quantity of output. Therefore finishing a task faster should not be a measure of how well the job has been performed. As an older “nontraditional” student returning to college after a few decades’ break, I find that I have to study much longer and harder and take far

more notes than I did the first time around. Generally the oldest student in my classes, I am invariably also the last one finished taking every test, but this only means that it takes me longer to think through a problem. I believe the more important factor to consider is that I usually receive one of the highest scores on the test. I am living proof of exactly what Cappelli, Novelli, Ng and Feldman contend: an older individual can master college-level (or work-related) material if given more time!

I also understand how some of the negative stereotypes about older workers have been formed. For those older individuals who, for example, were not required to use computers in their previous lines of work, having to learn to use a device as simple as a cash register in a fast-food restaurant can be a daunting task. Younger generations, on the other hand, have grown up using today's technology. Yet, even though I identify with the frustration of younger workers assigned to teaching new tasks to older coworkers (—I gave up trying to teach my elderly mother how to use her VCR many years ago—), I wholeheartedly agree

with the authors: older individuals who have worked in business settings have, like their younger counterparts, been exposed to modern technology for the past twenty to thirty years. Many older people of my acquaintance, even those in their seventies, use PCs and smart phones and actively participate in social networking. They are not at all like the comical little old lady currently portrayed in television commercials, who confuses gluing photographs to her living room wall with posting pictures to Facebook, but, unfortunately, this stereotype persists!

The third myth confronted by Cappelli and Novelli is the common misconception that that older workers are more costly to employ. While true that wages tend to rise with age, they point out that wages are actually determined by tenure with the company and overall years in the workforce. They maintain that pay differences “across the economy as a whole” for full-time workers is only 8% higher for a worker age fifty four than for a twenty-five-year old in an equivalent position (37). Therefore, if wages rise in proportion to tenure-related experience,

**FACING PAGE:**  
*The Baths*  
Sana Malik





then it is not age that is being rewarded with higher pay, it is experience, and “older workers per se do not cost more” (38).

Cappelli and Novelli argue that hiring an older worker will not cost a company more and may actually save the company money. Vacation and sick days are tied to tenure with the company, so age is not a factor. Health care insurance, an employer’s largest benefit expense, is more costly if a younger employee’s offspring are included in the coverage. Workers age sixty five and older are covered by Medicare, and their health care costs their employer nothing (40). Cappelli and Novelli also refute the notion that older workers are more accident prone. Although the severity of injuries increases with age, older workers have a lower overall rate of on-the-job accidents than their younger counterparts (40-42). Finally, Cappelli and Novelli challenge the allegation that older workers have higher rates of absenteeism. Studies of absenteeism rates show no statistical difference across all ages for women and older men actually have a lower rate of absenteeism than their younger coworkers (42).

The job market in the United States remains tight while the economy recovers from recession. For every job posting, there are dozens, if not hundreds, of applicants. The job search is frustrating for every segment of the population, and I have heard grumbling implications that baby boomers are stealing

jobs from the younger generation. In “Dear Abby Weighs in on Older Workers Debate,” writer Carole Fleck refers to a letter written to a popular newspaper columnist, “blast[ing] older workers for hanging onto their jobs ‘so they can live lavish lifestyles’ at the expense of younger workers who don’t advance in the workplace, or worse, get laid off.” “Dear Abby” comes to the defense of the older worker pointing out that the recent recession and stock market plunge have devastated the retirement savings of many older Americans leaving them with very few years to recoup what they lost. Fleck explains that to survive joblessness, many unemployed older workers have depleted their retirement savings, and many others have given up looking, opting to tap into their Social Security benefits early at the reduced rate. Both decisions imperil retirement security.

Fleck further maintains that when employees over age fifty five are laid off, it takes them twice as long to find work as their younger counterparts and when they are successful at landing a job, oftentimes it is for lower wages. However, “43 percent of those ages of 45 to 54—the most of any demographic—said they were struggling to pay the bills and lived paycheck to paycheck. Of workers 55-plus, one in three (34 percent) said the same.” It seems that, as “Dear Abby” points out, many of these older employees “stay on the job these days just to survive” (Fleck).

It seems that for many baby boomers, early retirement is no longer an option. According to Butler and Berret, the 2011 U.S. Census Bureau estimated the baby boom generation population to be 77.3 million. The population segment of Americans over age 40 was estimated to be 142.6 million in 2011, i.e. roughly 46% of the US population fit the ADEA definition of “older worker.” Population growth projections for the next fifty years indicate that this trend will continue at an “alarming” rate. The 1980s goal of early retirement has given way to a new trend of people working longer, retiring gradually, or choosing not to retire as long as they are healthy enough to work (2-3).

While agreeing that there are “more older workers than ever before” looking for a place in the job market, Cappelli and Novelli disagree that baby boomers are to blame. They hold the opinion that there are actually “three separate parts to the equation that explain the expanding number of older workers.” While baby boomers have “gotten the most attention,” Cappelli and Novelli argue that boomers may well be the “least important of the three” factors (4). They use the analogy of a “python swallowing a pig” to describe the generation of babies born from 1946 through 1964. Like “a bulge slowly moving along over time,” boomers have stretched the capacities of basically “every . . . institution that they have touched”—schools, colleges, jobs, and now retirement, and Cappelli and Novelli

assure us that this baby boom “bulge” will eventually pass through the “python” replaced by “a smaller ‘baby bust’ cohort” (5).

Two far more important factors drive the increasing numbers of older workers in the workforce: Americans are living longer and older Americans are healthier than their predecessors, leaving the U.S. with a “population of older workers [that] will forever be bigger because of increasing life expectancy” (Cappelli and Novelli 4-6). It seems that older persons will be a part of the American workforce for the foreseeable future. Many of them need to work, but stereotypes—“myths” about older workers’ productivity, adaptability, and cost—prevent companies from hiring the very knowledgeable, skilled, and experienced individuals who may be of greatest benefit to the organization. Older unemployed workers suffer a double stigma.

Whether this knowledge will be an asset or liability to my own hunting experience is unknown. My only interview, the one that was reluctantly granted, is not likely to result in a job offer, and I will wonder: Would a younger candidate have been presented with the same stringent (not advertised in the job posting) set of requirements, or was I a victim of age bias? According to Rick Long, a lawyer with Kozloff Stoudt, a law firm in Spring Township, PA, “If the employer specifies reasons other than age for not hiring . . . it then falls on the plaintiff to

prove that age was the reason for the disparate treatment, and this can be difficult to prove” (Pena, H2).

If fighting age discrimination in court is costly and difficult, what can be done to eradicate the problem? Butler and Berret believe that “correcting the misconceptions of the older worker begins with human resource practitioners leading the charge as the champions of change.” The changes they recommend include: the need for leaders to reflect support of the older worker in their company’s mission, vision and values, mandatory diversity training, review of hiring practices (including online applications), recognition that work is not always “a source of supplemental income” for older workers, and realization that “overqualified does not mean over-the-hill” (Butler and Berret 9). But perhaps, Cappelli and Novelli offer the best solution to combating these stereotypes and stigmas against older workers by suggesting a very simple solution: we, as a nation, might need to “rethink our assumptions about what constitutes ‘old’” (6).

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## Winter’s Grasp

J. David Roslin



Like a hand from a forgotten grave the fingers push up through the last of the golden leaves.  
Winter rises from the grave.  
Higher and higher, it reaches as its cold frozen hands strangle the last of life from  
the meadows of the world.  
Winter’s touch may seem light at first and its deceptive beauty will call to you.  
Drawing you under a shadowed spell,  
It will ask you to come closer.  
Pulling at you as if it were a lover calling you to its cold breast.  
To lie with it will send you into an endless sleep.  
Winter’s grasp may come quickly to your throat or slowly close around the  
unsuspecting heart.  
It will promise you endless beauty as it creeps into your soul.  
You feel its cold breath and there is nothing left but to submit.  
When it wants you, it will not be denied.  
When winter has you by the heart, when it would take you for its own,  
That is when spring will draw you from beside the grave,  
And bring you once again back home.

## Changing Currents (A Bipolar Poem)

*Catherine J. Mahony*

Lackadaisical placidity engulfs me.  
Unclouded-I am adrift at sea.  
Reality concealed by a sheath of tranquility.  
Sublime waves relieve surface tension.  
My calming estuary, submerges my ruptured soul,  
suppressing my melancholy disposition.  
A turbulent tide shifts, as the surrounding temperature climbs.  
Suddenly, an insidious current pulls me under;  
Its force, unforgiving and all encompassing.  
Discomposed turmoil saturates me.  
Tiny goose pimples rise on my flesh, as my epidermis pulsates.  
Gasping for air, my lungs begin to fill with murky exasperation.  
Changing currents lend to internal instability.  
Unbalanced chemicals pollute a seemingly controlled environment.  
Acidic liquid permeates my consciousness, as I sink deeper into oblivion.  
From above I feel an authoritative grasp, clutching my body firmly.  
Leathery hands encircle my wrists and ankles, immobilizing me.  
Saltwater burns my corneas as I writhe, grappling for release.  
Resuscitated by a bitter awareness, I am committed.

## The Most Lasting Impressions

*Daniel Johnston*

If a tree falls in the woods and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? To the pragmatic bystander, such a question borders on the realm of lunacy, as all but the most narcissistic are willing to accept that natural laws remain steadfast in their absence. But when such a question is entertained from a philosophical perspective, it garners entirely new meaning, posing the question: can sound exist in the absence of an observer's recognition? Oddly enough, when trying to identify an individual as a leader, one finds oneself faced with a remarkably similar quandary: Does possessing leadership qualities define one as leader, or is such a title withheld only for those who have amassed followers? Both inquiries hinge upon the assumption that leadership, just like sound, can only be quantified through an observer and cannot exist independent of said third party's recognition. In an ideal world, deserving leaders would be able to amass observers through the value of their message alone, but sadly such a notion has been relegated to unrealistic idealism in a nation that consistently votes for head of state based not on political affiliation, but whether or not said individual possesses appealing characteristics.

It elicits no small amount of chagrin to share citizenship with those who consistently vote based upon vacuous intuition or the alleged secrets bespoken by unfavorable handshakes. No longer is it enough for a potential leader to simply have a worthwhile message to share. In order to amass followers, to make certain their falling trees succeed in creating sound, potential leaders need to make use of a variety of perception-based tools, as so often the way in which leaders are perceived is of greater importance than the messages they hope to convey.

American citizens who regularly participate in the presidential electoral process have more likely than not fallen victim to judging a candidate's merit based upon factors entirely independent from political affiliation. Such changes in perception are often fostered through seemingly innocuous actions, such as a candidate's posture or the way in which they hold their arms, but even more overtly influential is the way in which a potential candidate dresses. The 2012 American presidential election stands as a prime example of the connotations citizens relate to clothing, as both candidates were dressed almost exclusively in black suits and



red ties for the entirety of their proselytization. Fortunately, for both candidates, such matching attire was not an oversight or fashion faux pas, but an intricate attempt to garner public favor through means that are not entirely obvious to the casual observer. Studies conducted by the financiers of both main party candidates concluded that the average citizen associates power with the imagery of a red tie (Thomas). Given the volumes of information a particular color or article of clothing can suggest to an observer, it becomes apparent that the battle for properly articulating one's position begins long before a single word has been uttered.

Like a double-edged sword, the associations that a specific culture relegates to certain articles of clothing have shown to have a profound impact on the wearer's performance, as opposed to simply impacting the perceptions of observers. Such a phenomenon is entirely circumstantial and is unique to the ideals instilled throughout a specific culture. That is to say, while a three-piece suit may speak volumes to an American citizen in regards to affluence and leadership, the same suit begets feelings of animosity and frivolity to a citizen of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The associations a culture links with clothing and the impact such encultured notions have on the wearer are exemplified by studies conducted by Adam D. Galinsky, who takes part in a budding field of psychology known

as encloded cognition. Dr. Galinsky's studies show that in clinical trials, individuals who wear what they believe to be a doctor's coat are more likely to spot minor differences in memory tests than their counterparts wearing the exact same coat, who were led to believe it was an artist's smock (qtd. in Blakeslee). Such studies have made evident the importance of donning the uniform one's specific culture identifies with leadership, as so often convincing oneself of one's leadership role is an integral step in convincing others.

While it may seem like the notion of garnering observers and properly articulating an idea is too perilous to surmount simply given the volumes personal attire can speak, one must remember that overcoming such a hurdle is simply akin to getting one's foot in the door. In a study conducted by Neil Vidyarthi, the average person's attention span is only five minutes, a figure shrinking rapidly in a nation so inundated with immediate gratification. Such a small window of opportunity makes paramount the importance of being succinct when presenting a viewpoint. Similar scenarios with comparable margins for error are job interviews, which require many of the tools and tactics necessary when trying to articulate a point of view. According to Carol Kinsey Goman, an occupational psychologist, the largest obstacle to overcome in an interview is exemplifying oneself as a trustworthy

individual. Given the limited amount of time usually reserved for interviews, coupled with the bovine onslaught of incessant questions created with the ham-fisted intent of weeding out undesirables, conveying oneself as a trustworthy individual becomes quite the task. Thankfully, there exist ways to subliminally put one's conversational partner at ease through the manipulation of proxemics, which has the fantastic result of eliciting said feelings of trust.

To witness the ease-inducing benefits of proxemics, one needs look no further than one's own actions during an intimate discussion. As conversation progresses and becomes livelier, conversational partners begin to subconsciously mimic one another. Such imitation is not overt, and more often than not surmounts to nothing more than matching hand gestures or posture. According to Benedict Carey, such subconscious mimicry is an evolutionary trait exhibited by humans in an attempt to convey habitual similarities to one's partner so as to elicit a mutual feeling of ease. Although it may seem downright uncouth or manipulative to take advantage of an evolutionary trait used to establish an environment as safe, one must remember just how small the window of opportunity is to articulate a vision, as well as the severity of

other obstacles that need to be overcome to gain public favor. Leading is without question an uphill battle and, against such insurmountable odds, all tools are fair game.

While the coercive effects of body language can be used to facilitate a sense of ease in personal conversations, analogous tactics are simply unfeasible and impractical to employ when speaking to a large audience. Just as a well-meaning children's guidance counselor may try to sit in an informal, back-pain inducing manner before addressing their young audience, such attempts at large scale proxemics manipulation are often overt and comical. That is not to say that body language is without use when speaking to an assembly, but the speaker's intention should shift from producing a feeling of mutual ease to eliciting feelings of trust and steadfastness. According to Gary Genard, a proctor of Public Speaking International, seemingly inconsequential actions such as the position of a speaker's hands or the degree in which they hold their head can have enough of an impact to immediately attract or detract attention to their message. This phenomenon is best observed through an examination of extremes to better understand the degree in which body language impacts an observer's perception. First time public speakers, for

example, often find themselves either with their hands pocketed or gripping a podium with a severity known to leave fingers in gnarled white masses. Such actions immediately detract from the message the speaker is trying to convey, as the resulting movements demonstrate an amount of fear, which, reasonable as it may be, simply does not inspire confidence. Vetted speakers by contrast are often seen to make use of both natural and exaggerated hand gestures, exemplifying a level of confidence in their demeanor that is easily picked up on by an audience. It is entirely unfortunate that those new to public speaking are often dismissed entirely due to their inexperienced body language, as it is usually newcomers who have the most relevant ideas to share, in contrast to seasoned public speakers who continue to proselytize the same antiquated notions in an expert manner.

Given the obstacles leaders have to transcend simply for a chance to have their message heard, it becomes easy to see why aspiring leaders, even those with worthwhile messages to impart, often find themselves bereft of followers. Gone are the days of influential speakers of a less connected world who were able to convey their position on the merit of their message alone. Current day leaders who wish to attain public favor need to distinctly measure every movement, every action, and every utterance, simply to assure their message

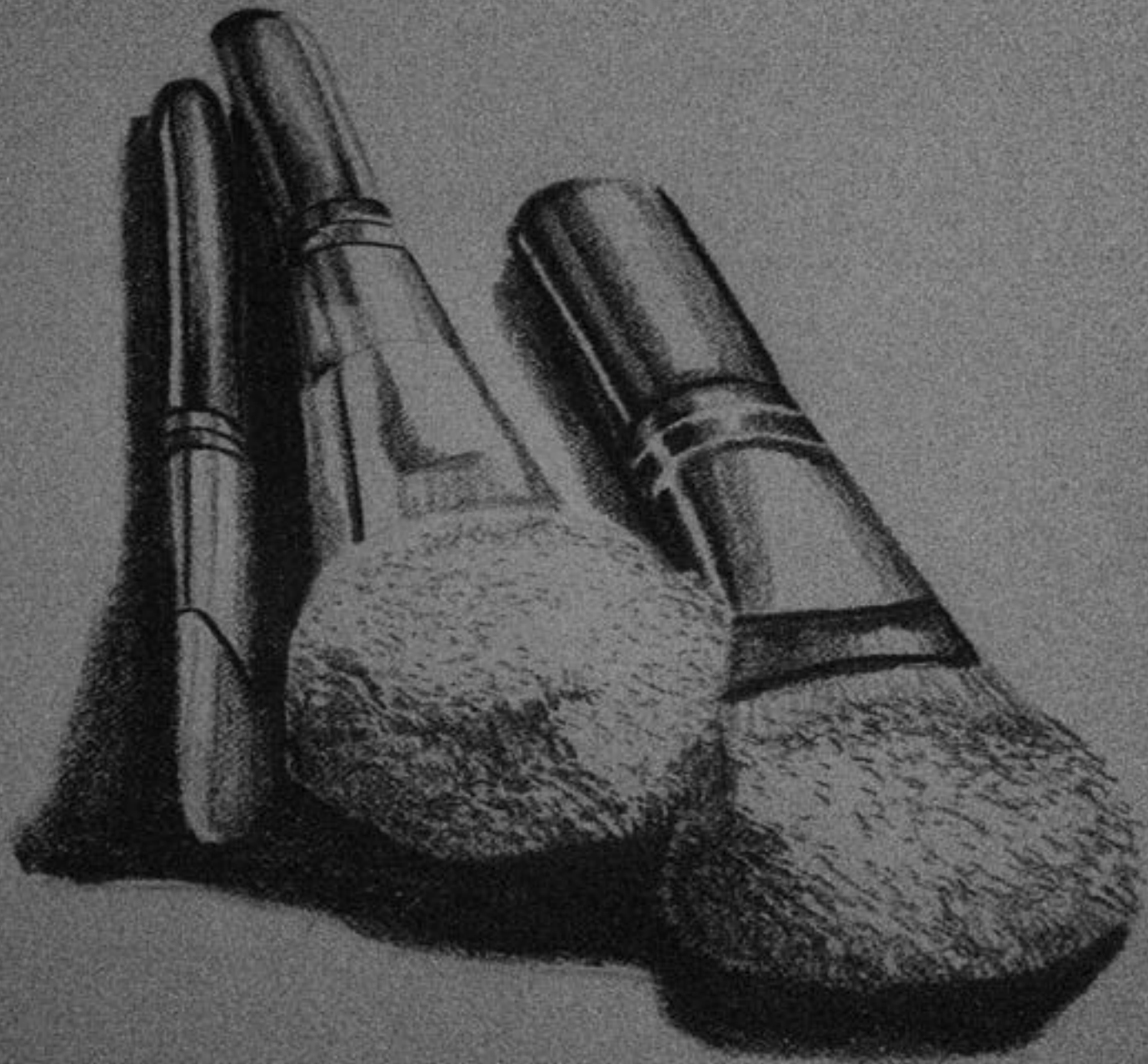
does not become overshadowed by the heinous crime of being human. While unsettling, one must remember that there are still worthwhile messages to be imparted and undignified wrongs to be righted through proper leadership. Those with messages to convey simply must remember how important initial impressions are. To act as catalysts for true change, those with worthwhile messages to share must be able to excel in the fundamentally skewed game for public favor.

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## *Behind the Gates* Jorge Quiros



*Brushes*  
Marianna Mello

## Faces in the Sky

*J. David Roslin*

I laid upon a hill one day and looked up into the sky  
Hoping that I just might see, an angel floating by.  
I looked west and cloud did rest, above my lonely hill  
There it played, and there it stayed, as if, the world stood still.  
I did not think there much to see from out this cloud on high  
Until a face looked down at me,  
A face up in the sky.

Her hair it curled around her head, her beauty brought me to a sigh,  
A gentle breeze came up, and took away my face  
My face up in the sky.

Some horses then some swans I saw as it began to float away,  
“Please don’t move I beg of you, we can play all day.”  
It was gone and I was glad, that I rested there just in time to see,  
That a cloud could contain such wondrous things to keep, in my memory.

Whenever clouds may pass my eye, I look to see what I might spy,  
And take my time and look once more for my faces in the sky.



*Playas del Coco*  
Carlos Hernandez

*Spontaneous Visit*  
Alexandra Fotache



## Language and the Illusion of Gender Equality

Emily Hall

Language renders power; with a single word—carrying both historical implications and alternate definitions—someone can admire, disrespect, slight, or even shame another person. The words themselves, the combinations of consonants and vowels, hold no actual power. The true power lies in what the words or phrases signify. People choose their words with deliberateness to express emotions and desires, to communicate thoughts and ideas, and in the case of males, to often suppress and belittle women.

Throughout history, men have used the power of language to control, objectify, and oppress women, and today, women—deceived by the illusion of gender equality—sometimes do not realize that men still ultimately hold most of the power. Although women have significantly progressed in society, they are still at a disadvantage in regards to language and communication. The deep baritone male voice continues to represent power and authority, while the opposing high-pitched and quiet tone of the female voice represents delicacy and innocence; society therefore expects women to use timid and neutral-minded language to match their timid and neutral-sounding voice. When women break the expectations of society and use strong, powerful language to influence

others or argue and defend their beliefs and opinions, men suddenly feel threatened, fearing that women's dainty, delicate hands might snatch management, dominance, and power straight out of theirs. To protect the fragile male ego and maintain their dominant status, males utilize language by instinctively possessing, unfairly labeling, and hypocritically criticizing women.

Unfortunately, women's disadvantages begin at birth as they are automatically associated with fragility and vulnerability. Although society has evolved significantly, producing a change in attitudes towards gender equality, women continue to face challenges that men have never faced before and most likely never will. Discussing the linguistic differences between men and women, an article from *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* reveals, "Women often like to speak in a high-pitch voice because of physiological reason, but scientists point out that this also associates women with 'timidity' and 'emotional instability'" (Xia). A woman's natural way of speaking, the inflection, the tone, the pitch, all create a disadvantage because a man's deep, baritone voice can easily bury any attempt a woman may make to speak out and share her thoughts with others. Because the male voice

sounds full, loud, and deep, it creates a sense of authority, which a woman's voice lacks, and even instills fear in others, which a woman's voice could never do, and the power embedded in the male voice helps men gain dominance in society. Women cannot control the pitch or tone of their voice; yet society seems to penalize them by choosing to ignore what a woman has to say because of how it sounds as she says it—still reinforcing the image of women as passive and silent. Glenn Beck, a conservative television and radio host, and a political commentator, criticized then presidential candidate and former First Lady Hillary Clinton in 2007 insisting, "Hilary Clinton cannot be president . . . there's something about her vocal range . . . She's the stereotypical bitch, you know what I mean?" (Allison). Although Hillary Clinton is both a Yale-educated lawyer and an experienced politician, Beck deems her unacceptable for the presidency simply because of the sound of her voice. After receiving criticism for his sexist remarks about Hillary Clinton, Beck corrected his statement, replacing *bitch* with *nag* (Allison). The minimal consequences Beck received ultimately convey that although gender equality has improved, the American society still allows men to demean women without fear of negative repercussion.

History has not helped. Because men ignored most opinions or original ideas a woman ever expressed in the past, women began

assuming the role of the airheaded housewife, who worried only about getting dinner ready and cleaning the house, to ease the emotional abuse and rejection that they faced each day. Of course, women's submissiveness and use of simple and empty language only made it easier for men to control them, furthering women's struggles in the male-dominated society. Mary Talbot, who has written widely on intersections of language and gender identity, provides possible reasons for women's collective decision to conceal their opinions and thoughts in her book *Language and Gender*, explaining, "Emphatic stress . . . as in 'what a beautiful dress!' . . . suggests that women use over-the-top emphasis because they anticipate not being taken seriously" (38). Historically, to avoid suppression and criticism, women did what men expected of them; consequently, some men—particularly men involved in politics and/or the media—still associate modern educated and working women with the skewed image of the passive, subservient housewives of the early 1900's, an image that modern women have certainly surpassed. Even though women have made impressive progress in developing new leadership roles, the leftover elements of patriarchy still allow men to maintain their privilege and control women. According to *Miss Representation*, a documentary by Jennifer Siebel Newsom about the media's role in the misrepresentation of women in positions





**Shelby Heckman**

*Silent Frost*

*Glacial Berries*

**Shelby Heckman**



of authority, “Only 34 women have ever served as governors compared to 2319 men.” Although women have transformed their language usage, their self-image, and their life goals, now focusing on roles in politics, education, and business, which was once considered an absurd notion, society fails to recognize women’s potential to effectively govern the American society.

Throughout history, men have claimed women as possessions through the power of language and intimidation, making them easier to control and their voices easier to quiet. Using one little word, “my/mine,” men have deprived women of personal identity and independent existence, conveying the definitive power of language. But with the establishment of women’s rights, the acceptance of women’s place in the work force, and the recognition of women’s prominent presence in society, women have gained independence. However, even in today’s world, where men proclaim women equal, some still act as if they own the women in their lives; although possibly, and most likely, unintentional, men devalue women’s independence by claiming them as possessions. For example, in the article “Personality, Gender, Age in the Language of Social Media,”

which presents the results of an analysis of the use of language on Facebook, the popular social media site, the authors draw attention to “the male preference for the possessive ‘my’”: “[W]e noticed ‘my wife’ and ‘my girlfriend’ emerged as strongly correlated in the male results, while simply ‘husband’ and ‘boyfriend’ were most predictive for females. Investigating the frequency data revealed that males did in fact precede such references to their opposite-sex partner with ‘my’ significantly more often than females” (Schwartz et al. 9). However, men cannot be completely to blame because women, today, hold the power to fight against any man who treats them as their own personal property, which raises an important question: Are some women allowing men to claim them because it remains easier than establishing their own identity and gaining their own independent status? Those women just need to remember that their predecessors have worked too hard and have made too much progress to allow men to reverse their victories and efforts towards creating an equal and fair society.

Women also must face the weight of

Because the male voice sounds full, loud, and deep, it creates a sense of authority, which a woman’s voice lacks, and even instills fear in others, which a woman’s voice could never do, and the power embedded in the male voice helps men gain dominance in society.

the gender-specific labels that men assign to them, often to compose an easier method of oppression. For example, although both cruel and unjust, a man can control and belittle a woman by simply labeling her as a poor mother. Men know that women pride their role as a mother over any other role they might attain, including their roles as working women and students of higher academics. Robin Lakoff, a professor of linguistics at the University of California, Berkley, explores the association between language and the gender divide in her book *Language and a Woman’s Place*, declaring, “There is no analogous ‘superdads’ or ‘soccer dads’” (20). Although men play equally as important roles in parenting and more and more men give up careers to stay home and take care of their children, such terms remain strictly designated for women. Lakoff writes, “A woman trying to juggle family and career is shunted to the ‘mommy track’ or warned to stay at home and tend to her family” (20). Men in high positions of authority often criticize and mock women in similar positions for their role as mothers, believing that women cannot perform the essential responsibilities and duties of their jobs while caring for their children. Instead of hypocritically criticizing and labeling women for maintaining a career and mothering children at the same time, a natural task that women hold no control over, men should grant women unwavering eternal

respect and commend them for balancing a career and managing a healthy family; motherhood prevails as the most essential and significant duty a person can have, and men would not exist without it.

But by far, the most effective method that men use to abate women empowerment remains criticism through derogatory terms and phrases. Numerous words in the English language, such as *bitch* and *whore*, exist solely to emotionally wound and weaken women. In her essay “Bitch,” Beverly Gross analyzes the evolution of the word *bitch* and its negative connotations, proclaiming, “Bitch, the curse and concept, exists to insure male potency and female submissiveness. Men have deployed it to defend their power by attacking and neutralizing the upstart” (508). Because of its long and complicated history of offensive implications, *bitch* remains one of man’s most powerful weapons in the battle against women. When a woman voices an opinion that even slightly differs from that of a man, that man holds the power to belittle her, breaking her confidence by simply referring to her as a *bitch*. Males seem to feel compelled to use this derogatory term when women take a stab at their egos because men value their pride above all else. Ironically, men would view such egotism as a petty and feminine quality if they used their own logic and stereotypes against themselves. In a similar pro-feminist article

titled “The C-Word Insults Women. What’s Funny About That?” Joanna Blythman argues that the C-word as an insult implies that there is nothing worse than being compared to female genitalia because such organs are repulsive. By using the C-word, easily one of the most offensive words used to describe a woman, men can inflict pain in a woman, causing them to feel completely worthless, impure, and unattractive.

Men use these curse words and other vulgar terminology because they can. When a man in any position of authority spats curse words and vulgarities, he is often perceived not as inappropriate or too aggressive, but as powerful and worthy of elevated respect. Yet, if a woman in a similar position of authority used the same language, people would question her ability and qualifications to properly do her job. Forcefulness and aggression are often associated with masculinity, and men feel threatened when a woman veers from the standard expectations established for all females and displays any signs of masculinity. Society hypocritically deems it acceptable for a man to use harsh, foul language because it signifies authority and power; however, women who use similar language are viewed as vulgar and unprofessional. When dealing with men, any sign of emotion is regarded as passion; however, women expressing the same emotions are perceived as “emotionally

unstable,” leaving men wondering if there was a sudden outbreak of “Hysteria”—the male-diagnosed 19th century female disease that labeled women suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as insane or mentally ill. This interminable list of double standards leaves women disadvantaged, making it difficult for them to earn respect or serious consideration in the workforce. When they speak openly and passionately (possibly allowing a few curse words slip), men criticize their foul vocabulary, but when they speak politely and quietly, nobody takes them seriously and their voices get easily crushed. Penalized either way, how then, are women supposed to ever advance in society or in their careers?

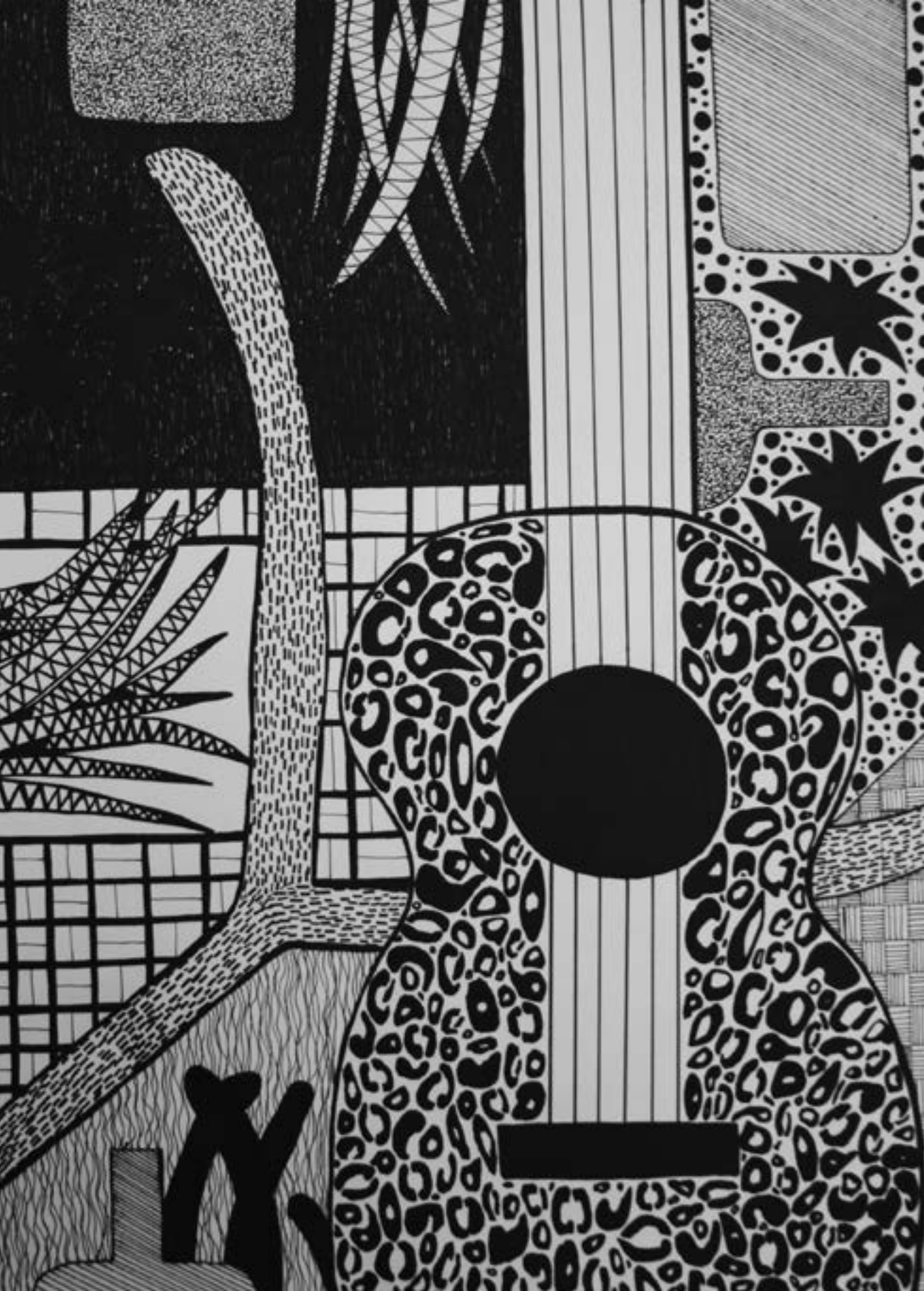
Although, today, it is not always used properly to express equality and fairness, language provides a useful tool, allowing women and men to communicate their thoughts and emotions. The question is: How can women break the cycle of linguistic suppression, and achieve control and self-empowerment? By learning to utilize language in the same way as men do and outsmarting them using their own hypocritical standards for language against them? Or can women alter the meaning and implications held by words of marginalization—and even use those words as a source of empowerment—so that men can no longer use such language to quiet, belittle, and control them?



## *Frozen Chicken Wire* Chrissie Studenroth

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*Leopard Strings*  
Amanda Zuchowski

## The Story of Princess Knows It All

*J. David Roslin*

ONCE UPON A TIME in a Kingdom far—far away, there was a Princess whose name was Princess Knows It All. Her hair was soft and silky, her eyes were beautiful and shiny, and her breath smelled like cherries and roses. Princess Knows It All was always bored. Every morning she would get out of bed, get dressed in one of her prettiest dresses, and have her breakfast. She would sit by the window looking out over the kingdom, and say, “I am bored.”

The King and Queen worried about the Princess, because they loved her very much. Every day they would try to find something new to keep their daughter from getting bored. The Queen tried to teach her how to sew, but after a few days the Princess just put down her sewing and said to her mother, “I’m bored.” The King hired the best dance master in the kingdom to teach the Princess how to dance, but after just a few days she said to the King, “I’m bored.”

The reason she became so bored was that she thought she knew all there was to know about everything and she was never going to

learn anything new. She had traveled many times through the kingdom with her father and he had shown her all the things that lived in the villages and the woods. On each trip, she would write down everything the king pointed out from the royal coach in her diary. Each time she would have less and less to write about because she had seen it all before. Now the trips with her father had become just boring.

Then one morning Princess Knows It All got an idea to find something that was not boring. She put on her cloak and walked through the back gate of the castle so no one would see her leave. She walked down the road through the village and into the forest. It was not a dark forest. The sun shone; it was warm and the grass smelled green and fresh. The birds sang their song as they always did; squirrels and fuzzy little bunnies ran through the trees. Occasionally, she would see a deer lift its head and smile at her. She had seen it all before and it was all still boring. She spent all that morning looking for something she had not seen before or something she did not

know about, but could not find anything; she had seen it all before. The day went on and she followed the path deeper and deeper into the forest.

At noon, she started to get hungry and thirsty. A while later, she came upon a well next to the forest path. Sitting next to the well was an ugly old woman working at a spinning wheel, turning wool into yarn. The woman was dressed in faded old black rags. Her hair was long and gray. Her large nose had a hairy wart in the middle, and her fingers were long and boney. "Good afternoon," said the Princess. "May I have a drink of water from the well?" The ugly old woman looked up at her and in a grumpy voice said, "Drink as much as you wish. It's not my water."

The Princess lowered the bucket into the well. When it was full of fresh cold water, she turned the handle again. When the bucket reached the top of the wall surrounding the well, she placed it on the wall and dipped her hand into the clear cool water. "Oh, it tastes so good," she said, and drank and drank. When she was full, she walked over and sat down next to the ugly old woman. "I'm bored," the Princess said.

"Are you really? asked the old woman. "How could a Princess get bored?"

"How did you know I am a Princess?"

"With such fine clothing how could you be anything else!" said the ugly old woman as she

kept spinning.

"Do you know something that isn't boring?" the Princess asked.

"We could play a game."

"What kind of game?"

"Do you see that log next to the well?" asked the old woman.

"Yes."

"There are five frogs on that log, but one of those frogs is really a handsome Prince. His father is the King of Grover, a large Kingdom on the other side of the forest. The woman who can break the spell will get to be his bride and become the next Queen of Grover," explained the old woman.

"What would I have to do?" asked Knows It All.

"You have to kiss the right frog," said the old woman. "But there are the rules to the game: one, you only get three kisses; two, if you do not get the right frog after three kisses you become a frog yourself; and three, if you win you have to kiss me too. Do you want to play? Come and play, Princess; at least you won't be bored."

The Princess thought and thought: "This should be easy and after all I do know it all." "OK," said the Princess and she walked over to the log. Each of the five frogs had different colored warts. The first frog had red warts, the second frog had gold warts, the third frog had green warts, the fourth frog had purple warts,

and the fifth and last frog had black warts.

"Rib-biteee," said the frogs all at the same time.

"You must pick one," said the ugly old woman.

Princess Knows It All looked at all the frogs. "I know it all and someday I will be a Queen," she thought. She picked up frog number four, the one with the purple warts. "Surely this must be the Prince. After all, purple is the color of royalty. Oh well, it does not matter, because I know it all; this must be the prince." She kissed the frog.

A large cloud of purple dust filled her hands. When it cleared there was a large Blue Jay sitting on her finger. "Thank you," said the Blue Jay just before it flew away. Princess Knows It All was stunned. She had been all through the Kingdom and she wrote everything she had learned down in her diary. "How could that frog not be the prince? How could I make such a mistake? I know it all, and I don't make mistakes," she thought.

"Choose," said the old woman. Princess Knows It All looked at the rest of the frogs. She looked down at the frog with the green warts. "This frog must be the Prince; it is the color of money! Wouldn't a Prince have money?" She picked up the green frog and kissed it. A

cloud of green smoke appeared in her hand and moved off into the forest. When the smoke cleared away there stood a magnificent Willow tree. "Thank you," said the tree. Then it pushed its way up into the sky. This was fine; however, she was looking for a Prince, not a tree.

She only had one kiss left. That is when she started to worry. How could she have made two mistakes? "Maybe I don't know it all; maybe there are some things that I haven't learned yet; maybe I should look around at the world. Are there things I still do not know? If there were more things to learn about, then I wouldn't be bored."

"Choose," said the old woman once again. The Princess looked down at the three remaining frogs. This was her last chance. If she did not kiss the right frog this time, she would turn into a frog herself. The frog with the red warts was bigger and stronger than the other two. "This could be the Prince. After all, wouldn't a Prince be bigger and stronger than the others?" She looked over at the frog with gold warts; he was the most handsome-looking frog of all. "If he was the Prince, wouldn't he be the most handsome?" she said to herself. Then she looked at the black frog. He was the smallest and dullest one of all. If ever a frog needed to be kissed, then this black frog was it. The Princess was confused:



*The Promise*  
Shelby Heckman



*Medio Corazón*  
Irving Guzman

“He couldn’t possibly be the Prince. Who would pick him over the big strong frog or the handsome one?”

“Choose,” said the old woman once again. The Princess looked down at all the frogs, reached out, closed her eyes, picked up a frog, and kissed it. “Thank you,” a voice said. She opened her eyes and there stood the Prince. He was just the kind of Prince she had always dreamed of: strong and handsome with bright eyes and a warm smile. When she looked down again, the frog with the golden warts and the frog with the red warts went “Ribbbittte” together and they both hopped away into the forest.

The old woman smiled. “Because you didn’t think of what you could gain for yourself, but were willing to sacrifice yourself by choosing the frog that needed kissing, you were rewarded. Now you must kiss me,” the old woman said. The Princess looked at the ugly old woman, stepped back, thought: “Do I really have to kiss her? I just kissed three frogs, so I guess it would be alright to kiss this old lady.” She bent forward and gave the old woman a kiss. The next thing Knows It All saw was a bright flash of lightning and she heard the loud roar of thunder. The ugly old woman had disappeared and in her place stood a beautiful woman dressed as a Queen.

The Queen took her by the hand and they sat down together on the log. The Queen said

to her, “My son and I were placed under a curse by a wicked old witch, but true love can break any spell. Come, we will return with you to your mother and father.” The three walked back through the forest and the village. When the people saw them they cheered and waved hello. When they reached the castle, the King and Queen came running to meet them. They were afraid that the princess was lost in the woods alone. Princess Knows It All told them everything that had happened. She introduced the Queen of Grover and the Prince to her mother and father. Princess Knows It All’s father sent a rider to tell the King of Grover that the spell had been broken and his wife and son were safe, and invited the King to his castle. The next night the King and Queen threw a big feast. After everyone had eaten, the Kings announced to everyone that the Prince and Princess would be married. The Princess announced she was going to change her name. She would become Almira, which simply means princess, because she did not know it all. Almira was never bored again and they all lived happily ever after.



*¿qué?*  
**Rafael Nuñez**



*Falling Leaf*  
Irving Guzman



*Faith as Small*  
Chrissie Studenroth



## Dazed

*Jamila Popal*

I was driving today, on my way home.  
The lanes were open on the freeway,  
A twenty minute smooth sailing drive.  
Then it came on,  
That song, do you remember?  
I remember you said we should see them live  
in concert,  
But we never did.  
God I love this song, it reminds me of you.  
I miss you.  
How are you doing these days?  
I've been thinking.  
About your smile.  
And the way you held my hand,  
Like it's only just us two in the world.  
Oh, the way you made me feel when it was just  
us,  
Still makes my insides tickle, in a good way.  
Oh, I'm getting close to my exit, where did I  
wander off to?  
I keep thinking about you.  
I stopped by the music store a few days ago.  
I bought a guitar, almost like yours.  
I tried learning to play it but I didn't sound as  
great.  
I tried singing but that made things worse.  
Everyone at home was disturbed by it,

So I went to the park.  
Spring air always feels so welcoming.  
My focus drew back in,  
Ah! Where am I?  
I missed my exit, by an hour?  
Next exit in a quarter of mile, I can make a  
U-turn.  
You have been on my mind so much lately.  
Pretty weird.  
It feels like it's been years since I last saw you.  
We were going to travel one day, far away,  
And go on little adventures every chance we  
both were free.  
We could've moved to a cottage up in the  
grassy mountains,  
By the water and drink coffee every morning,  
watching the sun rise and set.  
But we didn't.  
Where are you?  
Squeals. Crash.  
I think I'm losing you.  
Hold my hand, I can't feel your warmth.  
(Sirens wailing)  
Hello?  
I'm losing focus.  
Is that you, in that car in front of me?  
What are you doing here?

Lup, thud.

Lup, thud.

.....

There you are!

I can feel your warmth again,

And your fingers interlacing mine.

I missed your smile,

You're making me blush.

How did you find me?

I don't really care, I'm just glad you're here.

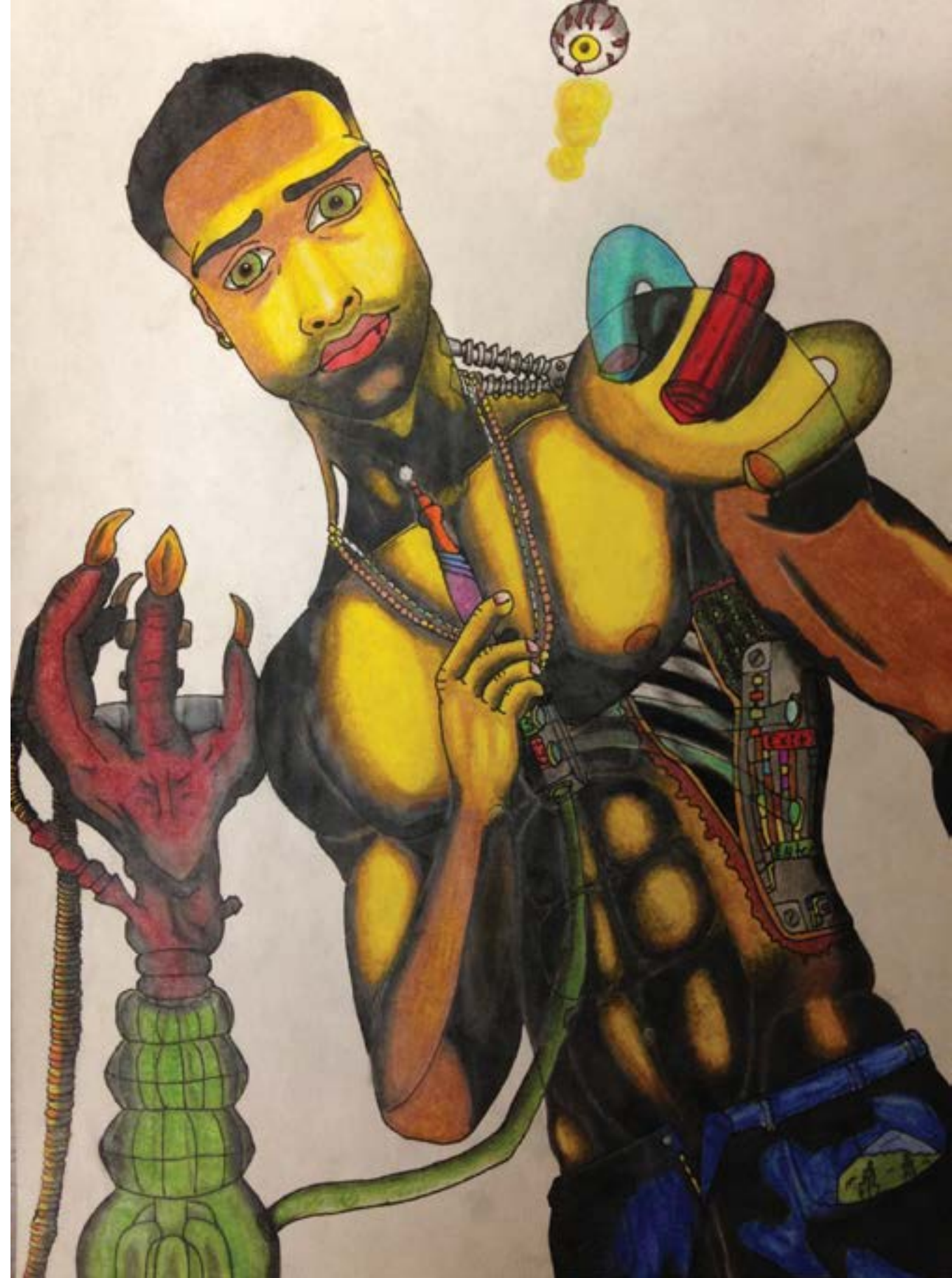
You know, I was just thinking about you.



*Zombie Girl*  
Shelby Heckman



**FACING PAGE:**  
*Hookah Dude*  
Rafael Escobar



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### Colophon

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2013-2014

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