

# Hear My Soul Sing



**Novel**  
**Judy K Johnson**



## A black and white line drawing of a dog, resembling a Cocker Spaniel, sitting and holding a large acoustic guitar. A small baby is sitting on the dog's front paws, holding a string of beads. The background features musical notes and lyrics from the song "Daisy Bell". The lyrics visible include: "Daisy Bell, the bell that goes ding-ding-ding, to me dear, dar - ling child. darl - ling child. by and by. lal - la - bies. er, love. Sing." The dog is looking towards the viewer with a slightly sad expression. The guitar has a decorative floral pattern on its body and neck. The baby is wearing a simple outfit and a beaded necklace. The overall style is whimsical and nostalgic.

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Hear My Soul Sing  
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*This book is dedicated to  
my beloved grandson, Blake,  
who with his kind and gentle nature  
awoke within me  
a profound awareness of empathy  
and the multiple blessings it bestows  
upon all those who embrace it  
especially in the communities of those  
with special needs.*



## *Author's Note*

***Warning: Proceed carefully, reading with cautious hope.***

This novel's authentic description of a devastating birth reveals an innocent newborn's shocking birth defects to his carefree, unprepared family. This irreversible disaster creates an immediate crisis within his guilt-ridden family, presenting relentless challenges in tending to his ongoing special needs. Future hopes, dreams and passions of each family member quickly vanish, silently mourned with great guilt since this baby may never even appear to be normal.

The author carefully explores in depth the overwhelming effects this baby boy's birth has upon his sister—effects requiring decades of self struggle to reverse the emotional scars of profound denial, guilt, loss of self worth, and even issues of over achievement and unfocused hidden anger. Will she eventually have to leave home in order to find her own life?

The reader will see the sister be immensely challenged to define herself throughout her youth. After years of struggle, her diligent efforts enlighten her to possibilities of rich, abundant blessings she

once considered unobtainable. Such blessings gradually reveal themselves with her discovery and development of empathy for those beautiful souls who, from the moment of birth, are burdened with continual crisis from profound birth defects. The monumental discovery of this empathy magically heals her own distressed soul.

The format of this novel is a combination of the sister's own thoughts in her "Notes-To-Self" journal along with historically accurate details of her family's experiences that range in time from the Woodstock Music Festival held in Bethel, New York to the Eagles' "Hell Freezes Over" concert in Austin, Texas near the end of the twentieth century. At each stage of the journey, family members are defined by popular music that expresses their emotions and encourages family unity. That music, originally offering the sister a refuge from her brother's issues, eventually becomes her passion. She finds herself drawn toward to an unusual career in which she finds unlimited opportunities to instill within others the very empathy that awakened and restored her own troubled soul.

When readers finish this story, they are urged to explore the section, *"How the Writing of This Book Evolved,"* which authenticates the reality of portrayed events or issues and provides references for those interested in further study. Also included are internet references for musical performances and medical data. These biographical details are purposely located at the back of the book without references within the body of the story so that the flow of the story proceeds uninterrupted.



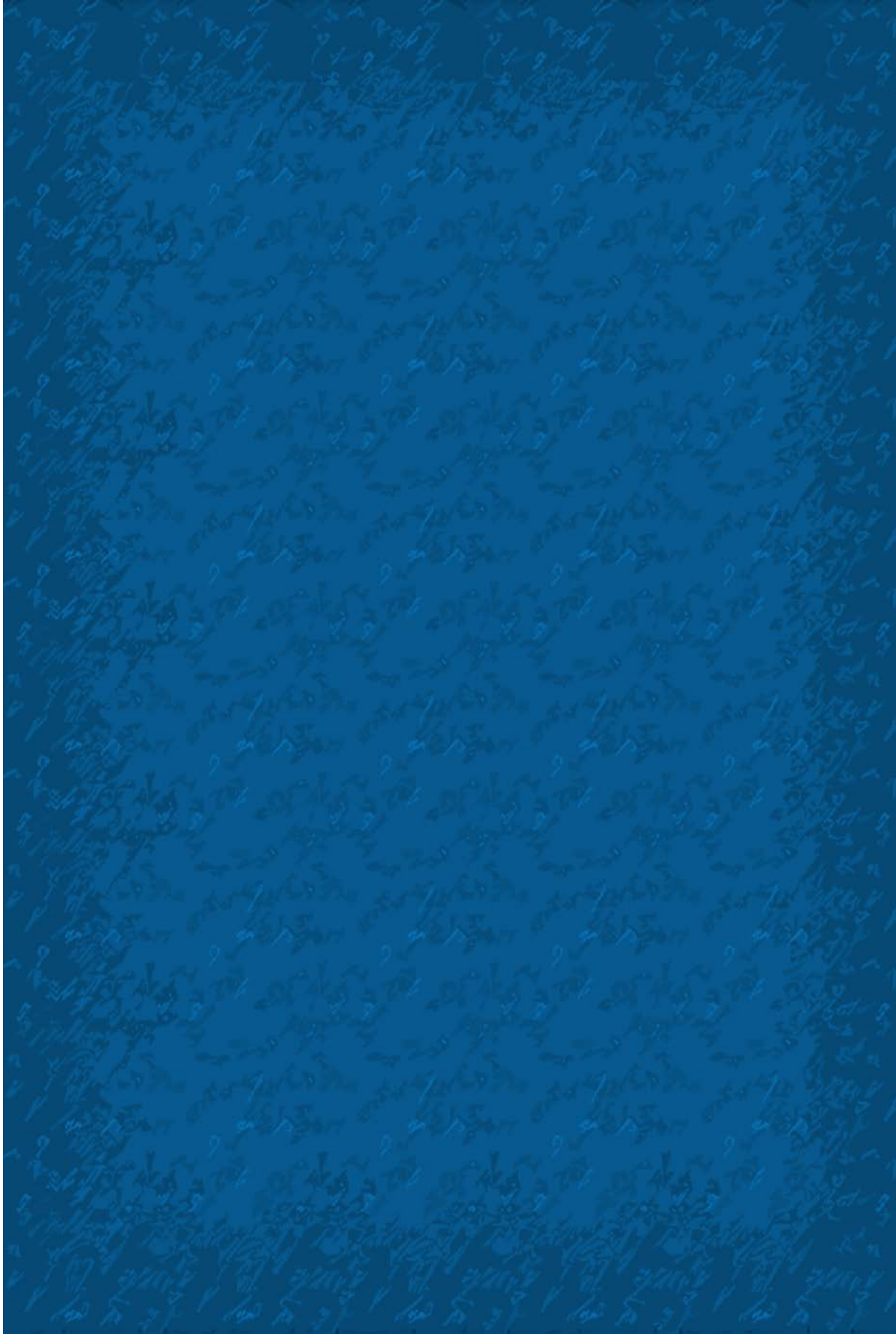


Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self





# 1



-Recalling November, 1974-

Once again, my most dreaded, lifelong night terror replays in excruciating detail as shivering-cold, paralyzing fear engulfs me. I'm just four years old, hardly capable of rational understanding but I'm engulfed in horrifying panic. My rapid heartbeat audibly pounds in my chest as I stand waiting at the open door of my parent's familiar but dark bedroom.

I'm obsessing that a vaguely recognizable, ghostly figure might silently float from out of the dark, corner shadows and reach toward me through what appears to be

confining, vertical bars, moaning sadly as it struggles then slowly dissolves. I remain frozen at the open door even when I hear Mother softly call out my name. "Stella."

Carelessly dangling my "Baby Brother Tender Love" doll by its outreached arm, I have no option except to irreversibly step over the threshold into this dimly lit, curtain-pulled, disturbingly quiet bedroom while at the same time instantly sensing my dear, distraught Mother's overwhelming heartache and my too-quiet and too-sad Daddy's inability to fix it.

Afraid of the icy, unavoidable, threatening tension smothering this once peaceful, inviting bedroom, I now stand frozen at the foot of the very bed that has often served as my delightful princess palace complete with fluffy, puffy, pillow clouds. It now seems transformed into a dark, forbidden island with horrifying monsters possibly hiding under mountains of smothering blankets that surround Mother and a tiny bundle she holds so lovingly close. I remain puzzled as Daddy stands with his back toward me, his head bent over as if broken, hiding an unfamiliar,

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distant, distraught expression on his face. I'm confused. Daddy has always been able to fix everything.

Mother beckons me once again to approach—her soft, trembling voice pinched with pain. I turn to Daddy but his head remains hanging, his face hidden; it's my first-ever encounter with grief. No previous memory from my young life has ever captured a comparable dread to provide me with an appropriate reaction. So when Mother turns red, swollen eyes toward me and pleads a third time for my approach, I, slowly, slowly, slowly place one foot slightly ahead of the other until I eventually reach her side of the enormous bed and timidly touch her pale, quivering, outstretched fingers. Intimidated, I notice once again the baby-blanket-wrapped bundle Mother dearly holds so tight against her shoulder.

"Is this my new baby brother?" I softly, curiously whisper my thoughts as some strange fear grips my pounding heart. I've been silently, internally fearful ever since Mother announced one day that our baby that she's been expecting forever was finally ready to be born. As we drove to the hospital, Mother "promised" I would get to see

our baby that very day. Instead, Daddy had been rushed from the waiting room to be with Mother, and I had spent a tedious amount of time looking at stacks of picture books with an overly friendly, hospital volunteer.

That was the day (Halloween, actually) that Daddy became forever, too sad. And that was the day that I first became aware that certain things would never again happen as Mother promised. Daddy eventually took me home without seeing either the baby or Mother. Our house has become way too dark and quiet ever since, as if stalling for some dreadful family revelation.

Today, Mother finally comes home but hurries past me as she quickly retreats to her bedroom with a tiny, blue-striped, blanket-wrapped bundle that I'm convinced must certainly be the new baby. Feeling all alone, I begin to wonder if I've somehow done something terribly wrong. Now, finally, Mother has summoned me to see my new baby brother. With her chin quivering, she softly whispers that he's a sweet, precious, baby boy and that I should hold him. She says I can help her take good care of our baby.

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Mother tries to smile as she pats the pillow beside her coaxing me up onto her bed. Her next world-shattering words endlessly swirl about in my head, words that I don't understand and won't for a long, long, long time. As Mother tries to somehow explain the many unexpected health issues about him—clearly beyond my experience or imagination—I've still yet to see my new baby brother concealed in his baby blanket.

Mother warns me that we must always be careful when we touch my baby brother as she starts to describe his birth defects. The bandages on his left arm and hand protect swollen sores. His left hand has an index finger and thumb but his three other fingers are just tiny irregular nubs. His left leg, also bandaged, has more sores and a crooked, turned-in foot. His tiny left eye is angled sideways and covered with scar tissue.

Then, Mother continues to remind me that we still all need to love him very much and take very good care of him. She promises everything would get better soon.

None of this confusing explanation makes any sense at

all. Without completely comprehending such strange, unthinkable, yet unobserved details, I curiously watch as Mother slowly, carefully eases that soft, blue-striped baby blanket away from the baby's face. Smiling hopefully as I first catch glimpse of a soft mound of brown, curly hair on top of his head, I spontaneously giggle, excited about next seeing our baby's long, dark, blinking eye lashes as the blanket slides slowly downward.

Then, letting out a horrified gasp, I jerk backwards, frozen silent, staring at that tiny, scar-covered, odd-shaped, tear-filled eye as this baby now lets out a feeble cry. Covering most of that side of his face are red zigzag, swollen sores.

As the blanket loosens, he squirms, jerking his arms rapidly about. In frantic disbelief, I notice the baby's bandaged arm as his tiny thumb and single finger reach out towards me. That finger actually scratches my shoulder! When the blanket finally falls open, I'm additionally horrified to see his shriveled, bandaged leg with his bare foot hanging loosely down at an impossible angle. I realize with peaked

apprehension that all these bandages probably conceal lots of red zigzag, swollen sores.

"This is my baby brother?" Frightened and bewildered, I shriek out loud, louder even than the hungry, pleading cries of this grotesque, screaming baby! My brother? Mother tries to calm me suggesting that my baby brother is merely hungry and just simply needs to be fed.

I quickly glance at Daddy, and even though he still hangs his head, I see defeated tears flowing down his cheeks. My next glance at Mother reveals a similar wide trail of tears also descending her soft, pale cheeks. I'm wondering if I've somehow done something terribly wrong to cause all of this heartache for us all.

Not waiting for any further explanation, I leap from Mother's bed. My feet barely touch the floor as I flee this scene of life-changing tragedy. Without any doubt, I know conclusively that my perfect, joyful life will never be the same again, ever! I run up the hallway toward the kitchen and scurry into Mother's large, well-stocked pantry closet. Slamming the door shut behind me I hide in a far corner

underneath the bottom shelf in total darkness. Venting my rage toward my new "Baby Brother Tender Love" doll (that I'd so lovingly fed and practiced changing diapers on), I shove it down into the empty, red gingham lined picnic basket stored in the opposite corner.

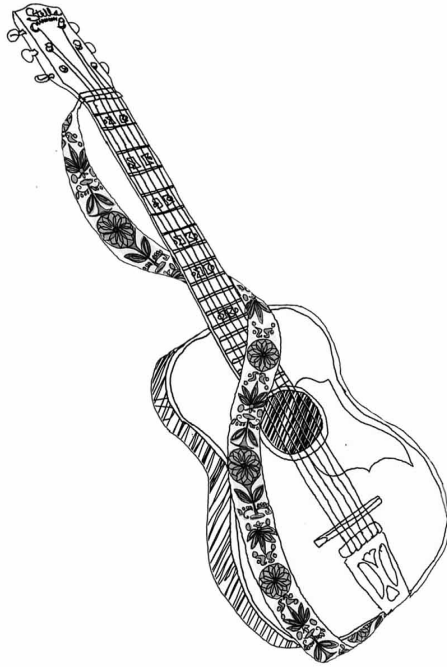
My most dreaded, lifelong night terror slowly drags on. I'm afraid to leave my hideout. Squatting and tightly hugging my own knees, I peer into dark corners and imagine hideous monsters with huge red sores screaming as they surround me. Startled, I'm aware they never intend to leave me alone ever again.

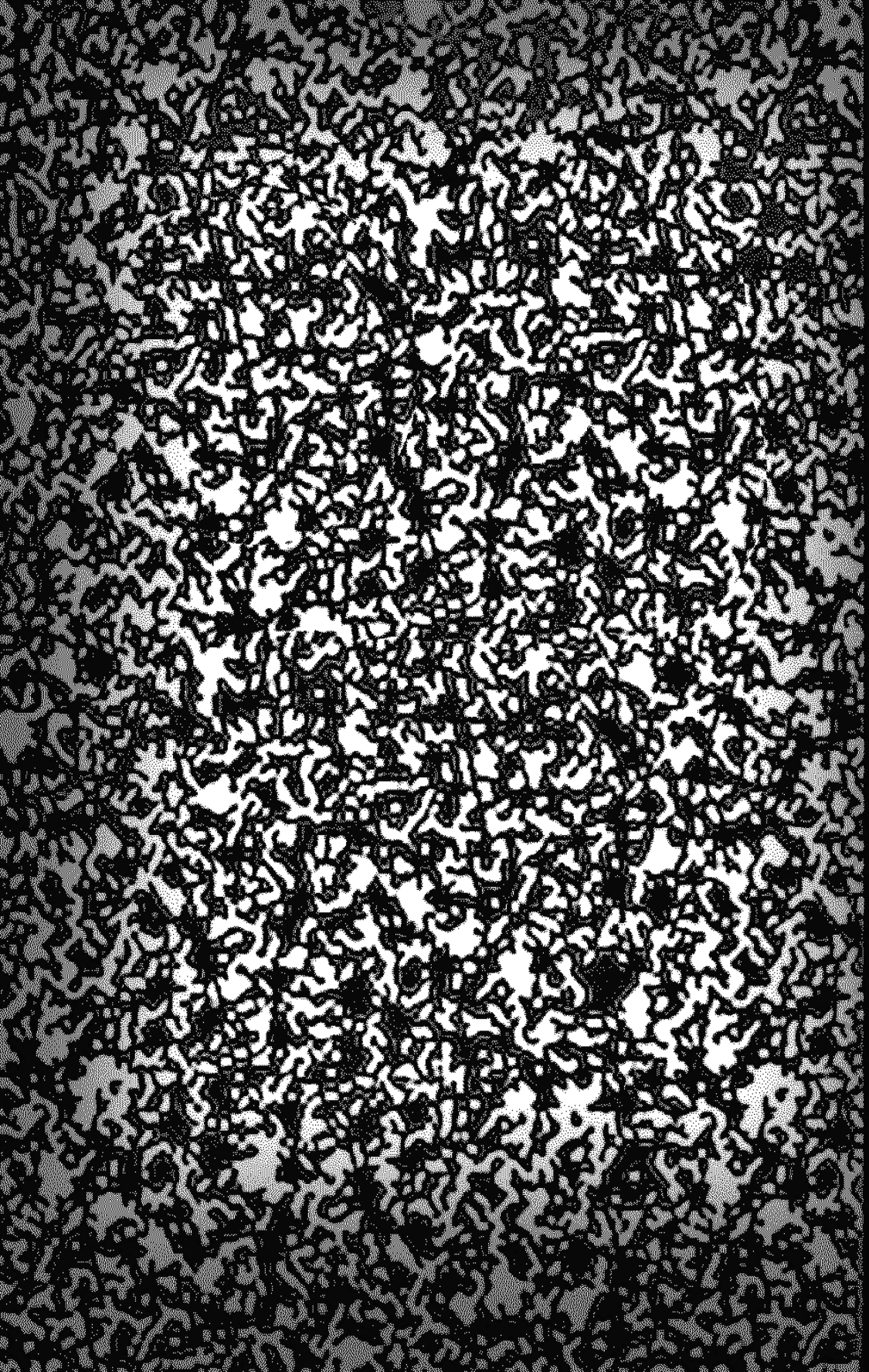
I can barely hear the distant, familiar, softly strummed chords of Daddy's guitar sweetly soothing me as I weep. Such magical melodies Daddy always played just for Mother and me to express his special love. My worries intensify as it occurs to me—that, apparently, I'm not now included because Daddy's not singing to me but to that baby. I'm too young to feel so brokenhearted.

I'm lost in a separate, dark world realizing that this new, unfamiliar sensation of feeling alone may now be a

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permanent part of my life. Still crouched in the pantry, I tragically wonder what I've done so terribly wrong to cause this abandonment. A terrifying sensation of smothering distress engulfs me when I hear the lonely, distant chords of Daddy's acoustic guitar as he sadly sings "Bridge Over Troubled Water" in his own improvised minor key.





# 2



Site of Woodstock Music Festival  
Hurd Road off Hwy NY-17B  
Bethel, New York  
(43 miles southwest of Woodstock, New York)

~August, 1969~

A brand new H929 Stella Harmony acoustic guitar slung over his right shoulder bumped against Harold's back on each stride as he trudged along the roadway. The webbed double-strap of a tightly packed sea bag slung over his left shoulder tugged heavily downward. Each step aggravated his blistered feet; his black leather jump boots, regular issue to all sailors assigned to Damage Control Division, weren't designed for hiking. In stark contrast, his well-worn, Navy-issued, bell-bottom, denim dungarees with heptagonal "patch" pockets sewn on the front and back of the pant legs felt soft and comfortable, as did his customary bleached-white, short-sleeved t-shirt, which, however, did little to cushion his back and shoulders.

Ironically, Harold's last name, Walker, was visibly stenciled in white letters just above his dungarees back pocket (also required by Naval uniform protocol). The rest of his working uniform, which consisted of a blue chambray shirt with his name also stenciled in black above the right breast pocket, a white so-called "Dixie cup" hat, and a set of Ceremonial Enlisted

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Man's Full Dress Whites was tightly rolled and tightly packed along with the rest of his belongings in his sea bag. Harold expected that he would get lots of use out of his three sets of working uniforms but had no reason to imagine he would ever wear his Full Dress Whites ever again.

He was hitchhiking south along the New York State Thruway. He had heard news at a roadside cafe that morning that the Apollo 11 astronauts had landed on the moon. Ironically, at the same time men were walking on the moon, Harold Walker was striding toward Max Yasgur's 600-acre dairy farm in the Catskills near the hamlet of White Lake close to Bethel, New York. His destination was the site of the self-proclaimed musical lifestyle experience of all time. He wasn't too sure he could even get there on time.

Recently honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy, Harold first heard about the festival in mid-April when his ship entered radio range on its final return trip, an Atlantic cruise to Puerto Rico. His ship, the USS Essex, an aircraft carrier, moored at Boston Naval Yard on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and his official naval tour of duty ended ten days later. Disillusioned by intense radio broadcasts of antiwar sentiment airing almost everywhere, he decided to hitchhike toward the New York countryside in hopes of finding a small town where he might hang out temporarily and consider his future. Heading west on US Hwy 90, the Massachusetts Turnpike, his life underwent a rapid transition from the familiar sailor's lifestyle on the high seas to an unfamiliar hitchhiker's lifestyle on the highways.

Pausing to rest up a few days in Springfield, he noticed a simple poster featuring a single white dove perched on a guitar neck against a bright red background that promised "Three Days of Peace and Music." Never before had Harold felt so impetuous, felt such a strong calling to go a certain direction in life. He had only enlisted in the Navy when his draft number came up during the Vietnam War. Now this long, tedious highway slowly unfolding ahead of him seemed to be the beginning of a promising new life.

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He asked locals for directions to a good music store and was directed to Falcetti Music where he met owner, Sam Falcetti.

Long hours at sea had given Harold plenty of time to learn chords on a friend's beat-up guitar. He had a gift for remembering lyrics, so sailor buddies often requested popular folk songs. Now, after purchasing the best guitar he could afford for \$37.50, he was left with precious little discharge pay in his small ditty bag which he shoved deep into his sea bag. As Harold turned to leave the music store, Sam offered him a great discount on a guitar case. Politely declining, he started out the door just as Sam tossed him a psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap and remarked, "You'll need this if you plan to carry your guitar all the way to the Woodstock Music Festival."

"Sorry, sir, no thanks, I'm kind of low on funds," Harold asserted.

"On the house for Vets," Sam called out before Harold could turn down his gift. He reached out and shook Harold's hand. "Hope you catch a ride."

Harold was unaware that literally hundreds of thousands of America's youth were answering the same compelling call to the Woodstock Music Festival. It appeared his entire generation was on a pilgrimage, impulsively drawn to this musical awakening like bees urgently drawn to enticing flowers. This comparison proved ironic days later as actual flower-filled meadows at the festival turned to puddles and mud due to an immense deluge of rain.

At sunrise, August 15<sup>th</sup>, with a brilliant horizon to his left, Harold, headed south on the New York State Thruway on his slow, steady journey. He was elated when, just moments later, a dusty rattle-trap 18-wheeler bounced to a stop, air brakes hissing. A dusty, grimy trucker, who identified the "Walker"-stenciled dungarees as part of a sailor's attire, offered a ride that would actually take him all the way to his music festival destination.

"We Vets need to stick together. Now-a-days, people blame us for the whole rotten Vietnam War. Those lazy draft-dodgers pretend they're celebrities instead of the dirty, rotten scum they really are!" declared the

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trucker, an ex-marine with a defensive attitude.

Twelve hours later, Harold was dropped off in the middle of a twenty-mile long traffic jam with abandoned cars blocking the roads. Harold had never seen anything like it. At the last minute, noticing rain beginning to spatter his windshield and knowing that Harold carried only minimal gear, the frustrated yet sympathetic trucker reached behind his cab seat to retrieve a folded tarp that he tossed down to Harold. Amazed at the trucker's compassionate gesture, Harold snapped to attention and sharply saluted him before retrieving the tarp lying near his feet.

Harold could hear distant shouts from Richie Havens on stage greeting the crowd by calling out, "We've finally made it!" Returning to the stage for his seventh and final encore, Havens loudly belted out the words of "Freedom," a new song he made up on the spot while on-stage, which established a key theme for the festival and would eventually become his signature tune. Throngs of relentless people embraced the lyrics which they hollered back at the distant stage. That Friday night as Harold approached the flimsy Yasgur Dairy Farm pasture fences, he discovered the ticket barriers had been demolished by masses of festivalgoers thronging onto the grounds. Loudspeakers began proclaiming at that moment that the concert had been declared free admission.

Later, it was reported that 186,000 tickets had been sold, but actual attendance was nearly half a million. The festival's chief medical officer, Dr. William Abruzzi, sincerely commented to *Rolling Stone* magazine, "These people are really beautiful. There has been no violence whatsoever, which is really remarkable for a crowd of this size." Only about 75 people in the area were arrested for possessing narcotics, although security didn't stop anyone from using marijuana. However, hundreds were treated for badly manufactured LSD.

Harold meandered around the grounds noticing what he estimated to be

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thousands of tents, campers, and makeshift lean-to shacks made of materials found on hand like trees, wood, ropes, sheets, and blankets. One huge teepee constructed around the trunk of a towering elm tree had a bonfire inside. Harold could see smoke escaping a hole at the top. There was, however, still another large open gap on the back edge of the teepee. By offering his tarp and his assistance in completing the makeshift structure, Harold secured himself a spot in the shared shelter and was thankful that his donation now afforded him a place to sleep and stow away his sea bag even though he planned to spend only a minimal time away from festival performances.

Someone working on the teepee suggested that they all go over to the Hog Farm's free kitchen, which was set up next to several hippie-painted peace sign buses. The Hog Farm, a commune that originated in California, where members received free rent for tending swine for their handicapped landlord, was currently known for busing across America and setting up music stages for mainstream rock artists. At Woodstock, they were recruited to build fire pits and trails on the grounds. They also used non-intrusive, peaceful tactics to keep security, calling themselves the "Please Force."

As Harold stood in the slow-moving free food line, he casually gazed at the horizontal, patchwork rows of alternating turquoise, yellow, and mint-green fabric on a flashy, ankle-length, bohemian skirt belonging to a talkative girl behind the counter. Instantly fascinated by the embroidered marching elephants with upright trunks on the bottom stripe, Harold let his gaze travel upward to focus on a mint-green layer (about hip high) embellished with beaded cascading daisies in various shades of vivid pink and dazzling orange. He shivered spontaneously when he realized that her hand-beaded daisies just happened to match his guitar strap. As his gaze continued to move upward, he especially noticed intricate purple amethyst-chip beads stitched along the drawstring neckline of her simple, white cotton peasant blouse, which she wore down off her exquisite bare shoulders in the kitchen heat. She handed

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out steaming cups of well seasoned stew concocted of oats, sunflower seeds, wheat germ, raw peanuts, currants, raw sugar, and sweet-smelling, warm maple syrup. By the time he finally reached the front of the food line, Harold was unable to take his eyes off her long, brown, shiny hair softly swaying across her narrow back as she moved back and forth between the food counter and bubbling pots of fragrant stew.

Earlier, glancing toward the end of the food line, she had already noticed the psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap of an apparently brand new acoustic guitar across the shoulders of the most timid and hungry-looking food customer standing in line.

“With such a fancy guitar, you should be performing on stage,” she suggested, smiling as he reached the head of the line where she stood with a steaming cup of stew in her hand.

Quickly, he lowered his gaze to her slender hand adorned with a twisted strand of hand-knotted turquoise beads. Unable to speak, with now visibly shaking hands, he was somehow able to accept the free meal offered in a cup. Nervously, he blushed as her hand lightly brushed across his own. Amused by such shyness, this talkative, outgoing girl leaned toward him.

“You'd better eat or you won't have enough strength to serenade me,” she teased.

“You smell as sweet as this warm maple syrup,” Harold bashfully complemented without thinking. Then, tremendously embarrassed by his silly remark, he retreated to the makeshift teepee.

“If you're thirsty, you can get a drink of water from the faucets across the parking lot,” she hollered as he hastily departed.

From a distance he was able to see her moving about the free kitchen and discovered that he found great pleasure just watching her. He slowly ate, enjoying her gift of food, and listened to psychedelic music flowing from the distant stage as he planned how he might possibly approach her again and this

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time be able to speak confidently. Somehow, he sensed that, like the tarp, his psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap might bring luck in the days ahead.

Later that evening, Harold carried his guitar, strapped as always across his back, as he strolled near the small, free stage that had been set up for use by any interested bands, poets, jugglers or soloists. He watched several amateur bands hardly able to carry a tune play songs, spurred on by the wholehearted enthusiasm of young hippie kids crowded about the stage. All that seemed to matter was the performers' desire to share their music with the crowd. It was evident that every song was a reason for celebration.

In an impromptu moment, after an amateur puppet theater performance put on by the Merry Bandits concluded, Harold swung his guitar forward and carefully stepped through a crowd of youngsters sitting in front of the free stage who were still laughing at the antics of the puppets. Walking across the stage to the microphone, he choose a favorite Beatles' song that just so happened to be on his mind—"I Wanna Hold Your Hand"—the last song he heard stateside before he shipped off in the Navy. It was the Beatles' first American number one hit, entering the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart in January 1964 at number forty-five and starting the British Invasion of the American music industry. By February it had reached the number one spot. Harold, caught up in his own fantasy about carefully holding the delicate hand of the delightful girl behind the Hog Farm food counter, didn't bother to look out at the bystanders assembled beyond the youngsters.

As the crowd rewarded Harold with whistling and applause for his song, he automatically snapped to attention. The youngsters at the front of the stage giggled at the sight of the ex-sailor in dungarees saluting them. Realizing that his Navy saluting habit might take a very long time to forget, Harold, embarrassed again, hastily descended the free stage steps.

Joan Baez was the only major act who showed up to play on the intimate free stage on Friday night. Standing within the crowd, she actually tapped

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Harold on his psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap as he left the stage and gave him a thumbs up. Harold never even realized that the girl from the free food stand, who had actually inspired his song choice, had watched his performance from the very back of the crowd. She found herself smiling at Joan Baez's gesture to the timid guitar player.

Wanting to disappear from sight, Harold hastily joined the masses at the main stage and watched Arlo Guthrie until 1 a.m. Later, he continued to blend with the crowd as they cheered Joan Baez's performance on the big stage from 1-2 a.m. She sang, among other songs, "Oh Happy Day," "The Last Thing on My Mind," "I Live One Day at a Time," "Take Me Back to the Sweet Sunny South," "Let Me Wrap You in My Warm and Tender Love," and "We Shall Overcome."

When the main stage lights eventually flashed, flickered, then stayed off, everyone went searching for a place to crash. Harold felt fortunate that the truck driver's tarp had secured him shelter in the large teepee. There were about twenty people sleeping inside with their heads toward the fire, laid out like spokes on a wheel.

At dawn, Harold slowly awoke, wondering if the beautiful, long brown-haired hippie had just been a pleasant dream. Stretching his sore back muscles, he stepped outside the teepee. Gazing across the vast festival site, he was once again impressed by the 80-ft. wide stage between two huge sound towers that each held sixteen loudspeakers all set up in the middle of this alfalfa field bordered by a pond (signs read *Filippini Pond*) near several groves of trees. Hundreds of portable toilets were scattered throughout the fair site. Already, each had a long, twisting line of music festival attendees waiting to use them that morning.

Choosing to wander toward a grove of trees behind the mess hall rather than stand in line again, Harold strummed his guitar, softly humming "Blowin' in the Wind," absentmindedly as he strolled. Nearing the pond, his

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humming ended abruptly when, once again, he could hardly believe his eyes. It appeared as if several of the commune folks were actually skinny-dipping in the pond! More importantly, in the middle of this amazing scene, was the girl of his dreams in the morning sunlight standing naked in the waist-deep pond and rinsing her clean, silky-brown hair. Frozen in place, he was unable to move, look away, or even actually take a breath.

Sensing Harold's stare upon her tanned back, the never-bashful girl turned and noticed the always-bashful boy, his guitar, and the eye-catching psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap. Suppressing a grin, she moved to the bank of the pond and put on the same bohemian skirt and peasant blouse worn the day before, still damp from being washed earlier in the pond. Though sensing that the girl noticed him staring at her, Harold remained still and silent even when she purposely walked straight toward him. She cheerfully announced, "My name is Monica. My friends call me Mony. Should we go closer to the stage so we can hear the music better?"

For the rest of the festival, whenever she was not working at the free food stand, they listened together to the music of Jimi Hendrix, The Who, The Band, Janis Joplin, Johnny Winter, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Jefferson Airplane, Ten Years After, Joan Baez, Santana, Joe Cocker, and Crosby, Stills, & Nash.

Joints were passed freely among the crowd, and although they didn't have their own marijuana, they often experienced the accumulated effects of second-hand marijuana smoke. As nights grew long, they shared wine and booze that were also freely passed among the crowd. Unwilling to leave each others presence, they shared his place in the teepee. As the endless downpour of rain drenched the festival, they sheltered together in an endless state of blissful, "festival promised" peace, even though the field of flowers outdoors quickly turned to mud. On Sunday night, still huddled under the tarp teepee, Harold once again stared thoughtfully at the vivid pink and dazzling orange-

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beaded daisies on Mony's bohemian skirt. As she leaned against his sea bag and guitar (his psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap blended with the daisies on her skirt) he became acutely aware he would never be able to leave her side no matter what, no matter when.

What were the odds that among the half-million, mostly barefoot, shirtless, or even naked hippies high on marijuana, Harold would actually meet the sweet love of his life and share soggy, three-day-old sandwiches with her in the middle of the never-ending rain at the historic Woodstock Music Festival of 1969? She was a smiling, mud-spattered, bohemian-skirted hippie with turquoise-bead-adorned wrists. By festival end, he was strumming and singing "You so fine, Mony, Mony".

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," she sang along.

Sometime during a musical lull, she explained to him that the Hog Farm commune members would be busing on to a new property in Llano, New Mexico after a brief, two week stop at the Texas International Pop Festival where she would work at another food stand. She was looking forward to the music of B.B. (Blues Boy) King. Harold knew that somehow he, his sea bag, and his guitar must find a spot on whichever nomadic bus she rode away in.

Although many concertgoers would remember this unique historical festival as a poorly organized fiasco, he would remember it as the adventure of a lifetime that initiated him into an unbelievably fantastic new life. Mony had already decided that she was falling in love with this ex-sailor, guitar-playing hitchhiker when she heard his impetuous performance on the free stage. She hadn't told him that during his song, "I Wanna Hold Your Hand," she felt her cheeks blush as she instantly fell in love.

The following week, Harold clutched his guitar and sea bag with determination as he climbed on board the Hog Farmer bus with Mony and headed to Texas.



Dallas International Motor Speedway  
Interstate Hwy 35W @ Intersection of Round Grove Road  
Lewisville, Texas

~August, 1969~

Once again, the Hog Farm was busy setting up their free food tent and “trip” tent (used to talk down people on bad LSD trips) near Lewisville Lake at the newly opened Dallas International Motor Speedway, the site of the Texas International Pop Festival. The schedule listed music performances to continue each day from four p.m. until four a.m. from August 30<sup>th</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Artists performing at the festival were Canned Heat, Chicago, Grand Funk Railroad, Janis Joplin, B.B. King, Led Zeppelin, Sweetwater and many other big names in blues, rock-and-roll, and psychedelic rock.

There was another free stage on the campground in addition to the main stage. The Hog Farmers provided a psychedelic light show as backdrop to the music. Hugh Romney, head of the Hog Farm Commune, acquired the nickname “Wavy Gravy” on this stage. Romney was lying onstage, exhausted after spending hours trying to get festivalgoers to put their clothes back on, when it was announced that B.B. King was going to play. As Romney began

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to get up, a hand touched on his shoulder. It was B.B. King, who asked him if he was wavy, gravy. Romney admitted that he was indeed. B.B. King and Johnny Winter proceeded to jam for hours after that. Romney said he considered this a mystical event and assumed Wavy Gravy as his legal name.

Many booths catered to the flower children by offering art, leatherwork, incense, T-shirts, candles, beads, and jewelry. Local residents observing from slow-moving cars on the adjoining highway complained festival participants sinfully swam naked in Lake Lewisville.

Harold and Mony were mostly inseparable throughout the event. Their happenstance meeting had been quite extraordinary, but now something feeling more permanent drew their hearts together. On Saturday night, as they listened to Canned Heat do "On the Road Again," the lyrics caused them to pause and consider their future.

Shiva's Head Band was a group in the lineup at Texas International Pop Festival. They were known for touring with Janis Joplin, Canned Heat, and Steve Miller. Mony, as outgoing as ever, chatted with the band as they unloaded and set up their gear. She discovered they were a Texas psychedelic rock band that had just started up two years earlier in Austin, where they were the house band at the Vulcan Gas Company nightclub. They were also in the process of opening a music hall and entertainment center to be called the Armadillo World Headquarters.

A roadie named Lucky from Shiva's Headband noticed Mony and Harold, the orange- and pink-daisy couple, working at the Hog Farm's Food Stand and admired their work ethic, along with their obvious attraction and devotion to each other. The roadie approached Spencer Perskin and his wife Susan, creator's of Silva's Headband, and mentioned the value such a hard-working couple could bring to their new enterprise in Austin.

Mony had spent the last few years on never-ending road trips while Harold had spent the last few years on never-ending sea voyages. They were

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both beginning to realize they felt an urge to stay together, settle down, and find a place to call home. When the roadie happened to ask the pair where they were headed to next, the two turned to each other and stared at each other in apprehension.

“If y'all ever find yourselves in Austin, be sure and come by the Armadillo World Headquarters. A job will be waiting for you if you're interested,” suggested Lucky.

Harold and Mony, still looking at each other, simultaneously smiled and spoke out together, “We're interested!”

Together, Harold and Mony approached Hog Farm leader and peace activist Wavy Gravy and nervously revealed they were leaving his commune at the end of the festival. Although he shook his head and voiced strong misgivings, he was not blind to the growing affection between the couple and knew they were both travel-weary. When they turned down the idea of traveling on to the Hog Farm's new commune site in Llano, New Mexico, he slowly grinned and suggested they then might like to have their wedding ceremony before they all parted ways. Although it wouldn't exactly be a legal civil union, the couple could always visit a Justice of the Peace in Austin and make their marriage formal.

As performers and hippies were packing up at the end of the festival, the exhilarated couple met Wavy Gravy at the now abandoned free stage. Handsomely dressed in his Navy Enlisted Man's Full Dress Whites, Harold, as usual, had his guitar with the psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap slung over his right shoulder. Mony wore her vividly colorful, lake-washed bohemian dress and peasant blouse down off her shoulders. Wearing his white jumpsuit and out-of-shape, oversized cowboy hat, Wavy Gravy officiated their hippie wedding as they each recited their personal vows.

The glowing coral and turquoise colors of the Texas sunset reflected across the glassy still water of a large lake nestled in the distant rolling hills

## Judy K Johnson

behind the free stage. This scene included the first evening star which twinkled brightly overhead completing a fitting, memorable backdrop to this group of three remarkable characters participating in this most unusual wedding ceremony.

“I’ll love you as long as such stunning sunsets fill the evening sky,” promised Mony as she gazed intently into Harold’s eyes.

“I’ll love you as long as all the stars above keep shining,” promised Harold as he lightly squeezed her petite hands cupped within his loving grasp.

“Our hearts forever united,” they spoke in unison as they both turned their gaze towards the western horizon in this moment that would be remembered forever.

“Peace,” announced Wavy Gravy.

At the proper moment, Harold lovingly placed a “good luck” strand of black, stone-carved beads with a Happy Buddha pendant, purchased with his remaining ditty bag funds at a festival jewelry booth, around Mony’s slender neck. Blushing, he swung his guitar forward, and sang, “I Got You Babe” to his smiling bride. After their deep embrace with several drawn-out kisses, Wavy Gravy handed them an envelope, which when opened later revealed two marijuana joints and two one-hundred-dollar bills (typical wages for festival labor).

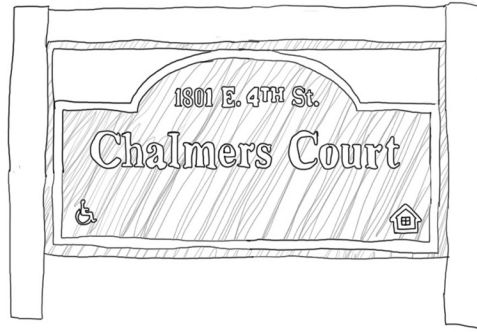
“Y’all hurry, this limo’s headed to Austin in two minutes,” shouted Lucky.

Lucky had backed the loaded Shiva’s Headband stage equipment truck up to the free stage, engine running, ready to drive back to Austin. At the conclusion of the wedding ceremony, this odd chauffeur and limo headed south with Harold and Mony in the back of the truck. The newlyweds leaned together against Harold’s sea bag for the short two hour drive to the Vulcan Gas Company Nightclub. Austin would be the location of their next gig, their own music festival for life. They felt fearless, ready to create their life together. Harold serenaded his bride, singing “Georgia on My Mind” but

## Hear My Soul Sing

substituting Mony's name for "Georgia." Absentmindedly rubbing the round belly of the smiling Buddha pendant for good luck, Stella smiled, blissfully unaware of her own, soon-to-be round belly.

# 4



Chalmers Court  
1801 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Austin, Texas

~October 20, 1970~

Mony dangled her Happy Buddha beads over the secondhand, thrift-store crib tightly squeezed between their own bed and the open, screened window. Their two-month-old baby girl giggled in pleasure as she reached upward with hands and feet. Harold would be home soon, anxious to see Mony and his sweet baby when he returned home to their apartment. She was the happiest, most precious baby ever and Harold adored her. He never anticipated the joy his daughter would bring him.

Reflecting back over their move to Austin, Mony felt that, just like their first meeting, things just seemed to fall into place. Careful budgeting of their first \$200 had allowed them to survive until Harold got his first payroll check from the Armadillo World Headquarters (formerly operated as a popular wrestling and boxing Sports Center, and before that, the location of South Austin's National Guard armory). As Lucky had promised, Harold was hired as a night shift bartender at the Austin hippie nightclub.

Following a suggestion by Lucky, and also supported with a personal

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reference from him, Mony applied for and got hired at Viva Les Amis café, largely due to her kitchen skills learned at Hog Farm's food stand. The cafe opened on May 1<sup>st</sup> at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Nueces, one block from the University of Texas and also next door to Inner Sanctum Records (where Mony spent precious tip money buying "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight" by Emmylou Harris).

The restaurant attracted students, semi-successful musicians, struggling artists, and would-be writers, all usually on a low budget, who mostly ordered a bowl of beans and rice—with cheese, if they paid extra. The atmosphere was casual. Customers often sat and read a book without being hassled. Mony rode city transit buses to work; it was only 3 miles each way. She became famous for developing the restaurant's cuisine, which she now often cooked for Harold at home, though seldom topped with cheese, which was not in their budget. (Viva Les Amis café was the future site of Starbucks in 1998.)

Their apartment was located in Chambers Courts, a low income HUD project with 158 apartments in thirty one- or two-story concrete buildings. After they discovered Mony was pregnant with their first child, they had been delighted to find this modest apartment. Rhythm birth control had definitely not been effective for their passionate new marriage.

Mony smiled again at her precious daughter still kicking up at the Happy Buddha beads. She was pleased that their one-bedroom apartment was on ground floor. It was so much easier with the baby. She also planted a large flowerpot with pink and orange daisies that sat just outside their front door. They often sat out there in the evening while Harold played his acoustic guitar and sang folk songs about their love before he left for work at Armadillo World Headquarters. On their front step, the bicycle on loan from Lucky was parked. Harold rode it two miles each way to the 'Dillo.

Their apartment, located less than one mile east of downtown Austin, was very small, with little storage space and the tiniest kitchen and bathroom ever. The thirty-year old building was made of thick, dense concrete and masonry,

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so all the apartments retained miserable heat during the summer. The tiny living room window A/C unit often only sputtered bits of cool air because apartment wiring was not reliable. Utilities were nearly impossible to fix since they were embedded within the concrete floors, ceilings, and masonry walls. It was rumored that sewer and site drainage didn't meet code although greater concern was the possibility of exposure to lead-based paint in the units and asbestos in the floor tile, sinks, and wall texture. Harold and Mony had no time to worry about these maintenance problems. They were just happy they had a roof over their heads.

The front screen door squeaked open and then bounced shut. Mony laughed as Harold called out for his Stella Harmony. At their daughter's birth, they had quite a time picking out a proper name for such a splendid baby girl. They were both very adamant that her name would be a combination of both their names and also be reminiscent of their fate-filled, Woodstock meeting. Combining their names together, part Harold, part Mony, quickly produced "Harmony." Then, inspired as he glanced at the brand name of his ever-present guitar, Harold proudly announced her full name. In cursive lettering on the head stock of his prized guitar was her clearly destined name, Stella Harmony.

Princess Stella Harmony had been barely twenty minutes old, swaddled and contentedly cuddled in Mony's arms, when Harold, her brand new adoring Daddy, softly, tearfully serenaded them with "God Only Knows"—the heartfelt single from the B-side of The Beach Boys single "Wouldn't It Be Nice".

Unruled Composition Book

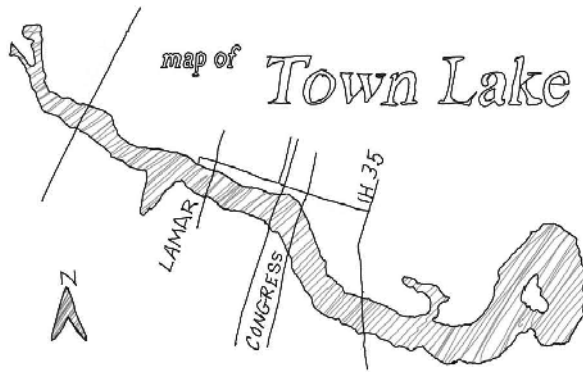
Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



Judy K Johnson

5



Town Lake Shoreline  
(south of downtown over Congress Ave. Bridge)  
Austin, Texas

-Recalling November, 1972-

My earliest, precious princess memories (before lonely darkness engulfed me) are treasured gems that I hold in my heart, few but priceless. I ponder them often so I'll never forget that short time when my small world was perfect. At the time, I thought it would never end. I was the royal princess of a joyful, magical kingdom that was supposed to go on forever. Some special memories about my dear Daddy

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are etched so vividly and securely in my thoughts that I know I'll always be able to recall them.

I'm sitting on a blanket shaded under a baby pink parasol safely away from the edge of the water where Mother stands working a long fishing pole back and forth. Entranced with the peacock feather pattern above me, I'm busy watching as an unseasonably warm breeze sways the parasol back and forth. Daddy lazes nearby, fingerpicking his guitar, singing "Can't Take My Eyes Off You." The words "pretty baby" make me giggle and coo in pure delight.

The breeze makes me thirsty so Daddy holds a cup of cool, lip-puckering, sweet lemonade to my lips. I remember that whenever I feel any discomfort, Daddy is quickly there to sooth me. At any moment, he's always available for countless hugs and kisses. My early memories of his face are an ever present smile with sparkling eyes, and his cheeks are often pressed against mine. It's not unusual for him to pull off my shoes and socks just to tickle my toes.

Mother is cheering from the shore mostly overgrown with tall, thick weeds. The fishing pole she is holding seems

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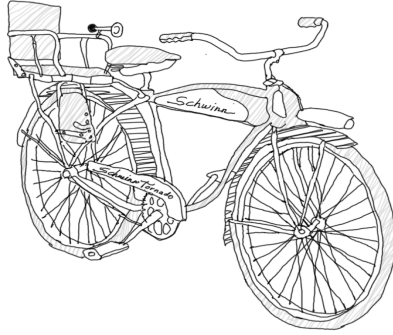
to pull her closer to the water's edge. Then accompanied by her exuberant shout, a fish flips from the water and bounces about on the shoreline. Rushing to her assistance, Daddy captures the fish, removes the hook, and then places it in the cooler with another fish already there. There's not many fish here yet, but Mother is as patient with her fishing as she is with everything.

Always, this memory instantly triggers another memory right behind. Mother is frying fresh fish in the tiny kitchen. She places plates of fresh peas and fish before Daddy and me. The fish is delightfully tender and salty—I remember eating it with just my chubby fingers, enthusiastically licking them between mouthfuls. I also remember laughing because Daddy is licking his fingers just like me. Mother eats all her fish and quickly reaches for the last piece on the platter between us. Our rewarding fishing adventures followed by delicious, fried fish dinners are a frequent family adventure before my brother is born.

Another gem of a memory is Daddy taking me for a ride on Lucky's bike that he primarily uses to ride to work. He

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transports me around behind him in the rear mounted green metal "Schwinn Approved Child's Seat/Rear Utility Rack".



The wind blows my hair back and I feel happy. My favorite adventure is riding over the arched six lane Congress Avenue Bridge above Town Lake where we fish.

Daddy had fastened a bike horn to the side of my seat, and I incessantly squeeze it as we ride along—causing Daddy to burst out in long and loud laughter. We're a dandy pair cruising on that old red Schwinn Deluxe Tornado bicycle. I'm so spoiled that I carefully watch Daddy whenever he approaches our apartment door to leave. I know he'll be riding the bike when he tells me he's going to work. When he gives me a good-bye hug, I refuse to let go without

## Hear My Soul Sing

crying. He patiently relieves my anxiety by consenting to a short ride around the block. Then I reward his efforts with a smile, a kiss, and a cheerful wave as he rides off to work.

We all three love going to the river almost daily, even if it's considered an eyesore by the community with the shoreline neglected and polluted. Then one remarkable morning as Daddy is reading the morning paper, he jumps up in joy. After dancing a cheerful jig in front of us, he explains that Mayor Roy Butler has partnered with Lady Bird Johnson to establish the Town Lake Beautification Committee to transform the area where we fish into a useable recreation area. A system of hiking and biking trails will be built along the shoreline of the lake to transform it into a major attraction for the city of Austin. (Eventually, Town Lake is renamed Lady Bird Lake.)

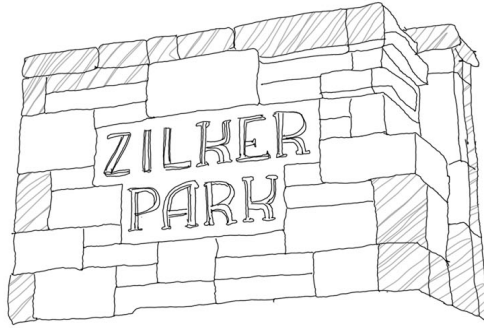
Daddy gets very involved with this city project. He loves the idea of trails for us to explore. He eagerly volunteers to help plant hundreds of shrubs and trees. On days when he isn't working at the 'Dillo, he works with the city crew. This is a fateful coincidence when he eventually is

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hired to work full time for the Austin Parks and Wildlife Department. Mother and Daddy feel blessed that he now has a better paycheck and real benefits. On weekends he continues to bartend at the 'Dillo.

Even though Daddy has a hectic life working two jobs, I always feel his steadfast love and devotion. I'm his darling princess and he's my Prince Charming.

# 6



Zilker Metropolitan Park  
2100 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, Texas

-Recalling March, 1973-

Mother and I stretch out on the grassy park grounds. We're busy with our project. She hands me chubby, bright-colored crayons as I color in the pencil-drawn shapes on the thick, brown wrapping paper. I'm impressed with several beautiful birds she sketches, both big and small, with wings stretched out in flight. I purposely colored them coral pink for the flamingo, white for the dove, and bright red for the

background. Daddy draws some curly lines, music notes and stars. Mother tells me how proud she is of me for coloring so well.

We happen to be at the Zifker Kite Festival, held every year the first weekend in March. Hundreds of people around us are busy with their own projects. There's lots of paper, tape, string, and ribbon everywhere. Until I finish my intense artistic coloring, I'm not quite aware that the project will transform into a magnificent kite with purple ribbon streamers attached. I'm a little puzzled how everything will work, but as I look around some more, I see the sky is full of many floating, sailing, and diving kites of all shapes and sizes, both big and small. Mother holds the reel of string attached to the kite and Daddy runs quickly away from us, lifting then tossing our beautiful kite into the air.

How truly magnificent and breathtaking! Mother holds on tightly as our brightly colored birds fly up higher and higher. Then, when I can barely see our own kite among all the others in flight, Mother hands me the reel of string. I

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feel the tug of the string pulling my arms. I almost think I am about to fly skyward with the kite. Eventually, I discover I can skip along forward and back and jump from side to side and the kite will dance in the sky. Over and over, Mother and Daddy clap their hands together, laugh, and cheer. I feel like their perfect princess. I feel courageous, strong, and powerful holding on to my magical kite with those perfectly colored birds.

At last growing weary of holding on to my fantastic kite, I hand the string reel over to Daddy. Mother has another surprise. She and I walk over to a booth where an artist is painting beautiful flowers on the cheeks of people waiting in line. Having never seen anything so extraordinary, I'm spellbound when Mother asks the artist to paint a flowing peacock feather on my cheek. The thin, fine brush tickles across my face, up and down, around and around. Then the artist proudly sits back and holds up a mirror to my face. The feather is fantastic. The day seems magical because it makes me feel like I really am Mother and Daddy's most precious princess, especially adorned with

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such a perfect, beautiful feather.

As the perfect afternoon comes to an end, Mother wraps her arms around me as we sit together on a soft quilt laid out on the grass watching the last of the kites continue their flight towards the first evening stars. Daddy, as always, picks up his acoustic guitar with the psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap and serenades us, his lovely girls, singing "Happy Together" under the deepening, dark blue skies.

7



Barton Springs Pool  
2201 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, TX

-Recalling September, 1973-

There is no escape from the humid heat in our suffocating little apartment. I remember the whirling sounds of a noisy tabletop fan blowing me a welcome breeze from a dresser near my bed at night. During the muggy afternoons, Mother lets me run around only in my daisy print panties. She pats my tummy and calls me her Happy Buddha baby.

One scorching hot day, Daddy delights Mother and me

by unexpectedly coming home early. He has a surprise hidden behind his back and makes me guess what it might be as I jump up and down in eager anticipation. When I run out of ideas, Daddy finally reveals a new one-piece, red-ruffled swimsuit for me and announces that he has a wonderful way for us all to cool off. Mother grins and hurries about to gather a quilt and bath towels. Then she dresses me in my beautiful new swimsuit and spins me around to model it for Daddy who leans over to hug and kiss me.

We load up everything in Daddy's "brand new," slightly used, 1964 tan and blue Chevy Impala station wagon. He is so proud of its 409 big block V-8 with 340 horsepower and automatic power glide transmission. He's done well in his new job. We are now able to go anywhere without riding Lucky's bike or the city buses. My favorite parts of our station wagon are the electric windows and the air conditioning, but it's also great fun to ride in the rear-facing, third-row bench seat. Mother likes all the room we now have to pack stuff. There's even a roof rack on top. I love our new car, and Daddy always keeps it shiny clean in perfect working order.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Daddy knows about all the best Austin parks because he now works for the city. As he drives south on Lamar Boulevard near our apartment, he explains that we are headed to Barton Spring's Pool. He assures Mother that there's a section of nice, shallow water where I'll have a safe and splendid time. He promises me that we'll hunt for the special endangered Barton Spring Salamander which I'm not sure will be a fun adventure for a little girl like me.

Daddy explains how this is actually the ancient site where Tonkawa Native Americans gathered, believing that the artesian springs surrounded by limestone formations were a sacred healing site. By the time we arrive, we are convinced we are in the middle of a fantastic "Daddy adventure" once again. We park and walk past bathhouses, looking with genuine amazement at the natural springs.

As promised, I truly have a delightful time splashing and dipping my face beneath the surface of the water at the shallow end of the pool. Daddy cautions me to be careful and is always just inches away from my side. It is a little slippery on mossy rocks below. The water is cool and

refreshes us all immediately. We watch others diving from the edge of the pool into deeper water, but the three of us are content to sit together in the shallow end. And true to his promise, at one point Daddy points out a strange little lizard-like creature hiding among rocks at the edge of the water, and I learn the word "salamander."

As evening approaches, Mother has a wonderful suggestion. She's observed me often turning my head to check out the swings at the new Zilker Playscape next to Barton Springs. We dry ourselves off and hurry on over to the swings, slides, and teeter-totters. Mother and Daddy patiently follow me from one play area to another until about an hour later I sit, happy but exhausted, rubbing my eyes, stalled on the bottom end of the teeter-totter.

This memory ends here in perfect bliss when I instantly fall soundly asleep as Daddy picks me up and carries me back to our station wagon. That treasured memory of Daddy's comforting shoulder and strong arms holding me against him as he strides toward the parking lot comforts me to this day.

# 8



Residence of Harold & Mony Walker  
Reese Drive,  
Sunset Valley, Texas  
(actually located within the city limits of Austin, TX)

-Recalling April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1974-

It's Easter. Early that morning, we pack our station wagon with Daddy's guitar, a willow-woven picnic basket lined in red gingham checks filled with lots of snacks prepared by Mother, and also a quilt with pillows gathered by Daddy for our picnic on the ground. We don't drive terribly far, but it seems like we are way far out in the country. At the end

of a narrow road called Reese Drive—where Daddy chooses to stop and spread blankets for our picnic—sets a place with lots of shade trees at a place called Valley Creek Park.

Mother and Daddy have not one but two big secrets that they want to tell me. Also, along with the enticing secrets there is another surprise that Daddy has managed to hide somewhere on the grassy lawn where we've enjoyed our picnic. I jump, squirm, then jump some more.

Williams Creek, a small stream trickles nearby. Daddy plays his guitar and sings songs by Percy Sledge: "Let Me Wrap You in Warm and Tender Love" and "When a Man Loves a Woman." Mother seems so very, very happy, smiling first at Daddy and then me. I notice that Mother is touching her Happy Buddha beads she's wearing around her neck. I feel very special, and know that they love me tremendously because obviously there is a big surprise coming and also two secrets.

Sitting on Mother's lap, she strokes my fingers softly, pausing to sometimes reach up and caress my cheek. I sense she is happy and peaceful, even though I see a tiny tear

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sitting in the corner of her eye. As Daddy's guitar serenade finishes, I hold my breath, wondering about my wonderful surprise and two mysterious secrets. Of course, it's my choice, and naturally I immediately choose to receive my surprise first. Daddy tells me to search behind the big oak shade tree behind us, where I easily find a brightly wrapped present with a candy-filled Easter basket.

Delighted, I race back to my parents on the blankets, where, squealing with delight, I tear into my surprise as my parents laugh and knowingly smile at each other. What a joy I behold! It's a fancy new baby doll that Mother informs me is called Baby Brother Tender Love. Daddy opens the box for me and hands me this most wonderful, beautiful, baby boy doll. He reads me the information on the box as I examine every detail of this perfect baby doll.

"All soft, vinyl, stuffed body with rooted blonde hair and painted brown eyes. A unique feature of this boy doll is that he is anatomically correct." (Although this is quite controversial at the time, my parents are very progressive. This is an excellent way to talk to me about babies.)

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"Skin so soft he looks and feels real. Adores being bathed, fed, changed, and loved. Teach him to sit, stand, and to pose just like a real baby. Soft skin, movable arms and legs make it easy to imagine he's alive."

I'm immersed in holding and cuddling my new baby doll, completely satisfied for the moment, completely forgetting two remaining secrets promised for this magnificent day. I dress and undress, feed, snuggle, and rock this perfect, precious doll in my arms. Satisfied and content I lean back against Mother; she asks me if I have a name for my new doll.

I announce I'll call him "Baby Billy" and then deliver more requests. I plead with Mother to help me make him some more baby clothes and diapers and baby blankets. I plead with Daddy to make him a baby bed.

Daddy reminds me once again about the remaining two secrets as I sit in Mother's arms cuddling my doll. Squeezing Baby Billy tightly, I pause, ready for Daddy's two mysterious revelations. He proudly announces the two most surprising, delightful secrets I could ever, ever

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possibly imagine.

The first one is I'm going to get a real live baby sister or brother in the fall. The baby is actually growing right now in Mother's tummy and will be born in several months. Wow!

The second secret is that across the narrow road from the very place where we are now sitting, this beautiful park with shade trees and a large, grassy lawn, is where we are soon going to live. Suddenly, I notice the house that is really going to be our own new home. Daddy says the sign at the mailbox says "Sold" because he and Mother have purchased the property.

Mother and Daddy, both laughing and crying at the same time, watch as I skip about, looking at my surroundings really closely for the first time, seeing in amazement what appears to be an adventure wonderland everywhere I turn. Daddy lifts me (I'm holding tightly on to my precious baby doll) up onto his familiar broad shoulders, which I always adore, and carries me around on a tour of our new home explaining every detail.

Judy K Johnson

Our new house is located near the end of Reese Drive in Sunset Valley, a tiny rural community started in the early 1950s and incorporated as Sunset Valley in 1954, even though it consisted of less than two square miles of land area with less than 200 people living there. It is entirely surrounded by the city of Austin. Our house was built in 1955 on 1.5 acres of land, which to me seemed like a whole play park. It has 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, and a kitchen with a dining area connected to the living room. Mom is thrilled beyond belief that there is a large walk-in pantry (which I later discover is a great place to hide). Another delight for Mother is the utility room at one end of the car port where she does a little happy dance. No more tiring trips to the laundromat. My favorite part of our new home is the currently empty rabbit hutch in the back yard next to an amazing, enormous garden, which is Daddy's favorite spot after the carport.

After this day of jubilation, my parents and I get very busy packing our modest belongings, clothes, and dishes into boxes which Daddy loads into the back of our station wagon

## Hear My Soul Sing

and delivers to our new home on Reese Drive. It takes him numerous trips. We only have two weeks to move. It's exhausting, but we're all excited because we're moving to the country. Lucky from the 'Dillo borrows Shriya's Headband's equipment road truck and transports my parent's furniture and remaining belongings, which includes all my toys now packed securely in Daddy's old sea bag, to our new destination. Lucky also loads the old red Schwinn Deluxe Tornado bicycle that actually belongs to him into the truck. Daddy protests that the bike should be returned to him now that we are moving. Lucky laughs and tugs on one of my braids, teasing that there are lots of places the bike and child seat will still carry us along those country roads.

9



Texas World Speedway  
17529 State Highway 6 South  
College Station, Texas

-Recalling July 4, 1974-

Daddy and Mother devise another adventure plan before the arrival of the new baby. They tell me we're going on a long drive—this time to a music festival weekend concert. They seem to know for sure how much fun it will be for all of us, so placing my trust in them and being a great fan of our adventures, I help Mother pack an overnight bag.

There is no question that my Baby Billy perfect doll

## Hear My Soul Sing

will go with us. He's my companion in the station wagon's third row seat; together we look out the rear window at the surrounding countryside flowing beyond the car. Daddy and Mother talk on and on about how wonderful it will be to have a brother or sister for me. However, the drive seems to go on forever, I become increasingly bored and irritable.

I fuss and whine for Mother to let my Baby Billy wear her Happy Buddha beads. She's been wearing her beads daily ever since our Easter picnic and the secret about a new baby. Mother says they bring her the very best luck. I notice frequently she touches the belly of the Happy Buddha and smiles. I envy that she has such magical beads. Eventually, because I'm relentless, Mother carefully passes her beads back to me to quiet me on our long drive. Grinning from ear to ear, I drape the Happy Buddha beads on Baby Billy.

The long two-hour drive takes us to College Station, this year's site of the annual Willie Nelson Fourth of July Concert. When we get to the picnic/concert held at the Texas World Speedway, the parking lot is packed. After

walking through a tunnel to the infield where the concert is located, we see lots of American flags displayed along the path to the stage although they hang limp in the hot, dry, motionless air.

We casually walk past an enormous blue-and-white-striped hot air balloon tethered to the ground, which I later observe floating high over our heads filled with people cheering from the basket hanging beneath. I know I'd be crazy scared to be up in the sky in the hot air balloon basket. Still, from time to time, I lift my eyes skyward hoping to see if this magnificent balloon is still in sight. The Texas heat causes us to seek shelter beneath the large umbrella Daddy remembered to bring. It seems he has some previous experience attending music festivals.

Amazingly, at one point, the crowd sees a cluster of fireworks launch toward the parking lot. Music performances stop because there's a car actually on fire where the fireworks landed. I'm mesmerized by the billowing black smoke and the site of people pulling water hoses from a firetruck pulled into the parking lot near the fire.

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Mother decides it's time for us three to leave this scene and take a little rest at our room at Ramada Inn. We carefully, circle away from the firetrucks with their hoses splayed on the ground. Mother seems relieved that we are able to maneuver our station wagon out of the parking lot without getting near the commotion. Happily, just minutes later, we stop at the Dairy Queen and order my favorite: cheeseburger, fries, and chocolate shake. Then with full tummies and tired eyes, we check into our motel room. Immensely enjoying our cool, air-conditioned room, we all curl up together and fall into a relaxed nap for several hours. Of course, Baby Billy, who I carry everywhere, naps with us.

When we return to the concert, we notice several charcoal burned-out vehicles still in the parking lot. It makes Mother more than a little nervous, and I cling tightly to Daddy's hand as we walk past, hoping that there will be no more worrisome fires.

People are very friendly everywhere we walk. The only other startling image I see is the sight of several ladies with their shirts off perched on the shoulders of men with

cowboy hats. I look cautiously up at Mother's face to observe her reaction. She is laughing with Daddy. This concert behavior apparently doesn't seem unusual to them. She does cautiously move us away from some college kids who are smoking something stinky they call joints.

I believe my favorite concert moment is "Diggy Liggy Low," performed by Doug Kershaw. Its pure peppiness entices me to dance and jump, bouncing Baby Billy at my side until I actually lose my grip, unintentionally tossing him into the crowd around us. Snapping to attention, Daddy jumps to retrieve him and prevents my immeasurable loss of this precious possession. When the band starts playing "Orange Blossom Special," he reaches down and takes Baby Billy from my arms, holding him as I start jigging once again. Mother and Daddy laugh with me as I bounce to the rhythm of the drums and fiddle throughout the entire song.

Another amazing performer, Marcia Ball, from "Freda and the Firedogs" plays piano in such a peppy fashion that I'm once again bouncing and swaying to the music in rhythm

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to her contagious beat. Daddy says her band is from Austin, and he's heard them play at the 'Dillo sometimes when he bartends. I'm hopping up and down in the same rhythm as she bounces on the piano bench to the peppy beat of the song, "Jambalaya." Her dancing fingers fly across the keyboard like magic, creating the liveliest tune I could ever imagine. I wish that I could make that musical magic myself.

Eventually, Mother says it's time to head for home, and, once again exhausted from heat, we leave these interesting sights and ongoing music. The parking lot at the festival is still full of cars, including the few that burned earlier. It's been quite an experience for me. This is the first time I've ever seen so many amazing people and things all in the same place.

Driving west towards Austin and our own Sunset Valley paradise, Daddy turns on the radio for some easy listening as we start our long journey home. The first and only song I hear playing is "I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song," Mother slides across the front seat closer to

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Daddy, leaning her head against him. I can see Mother loves hugging Daddy's shoulder just as much as I do. I fall asleep hugging my "Baby Billy" in my favorite third row seat while my fingers pretend they were playing piano as they lightly tap on my imaginary piano.

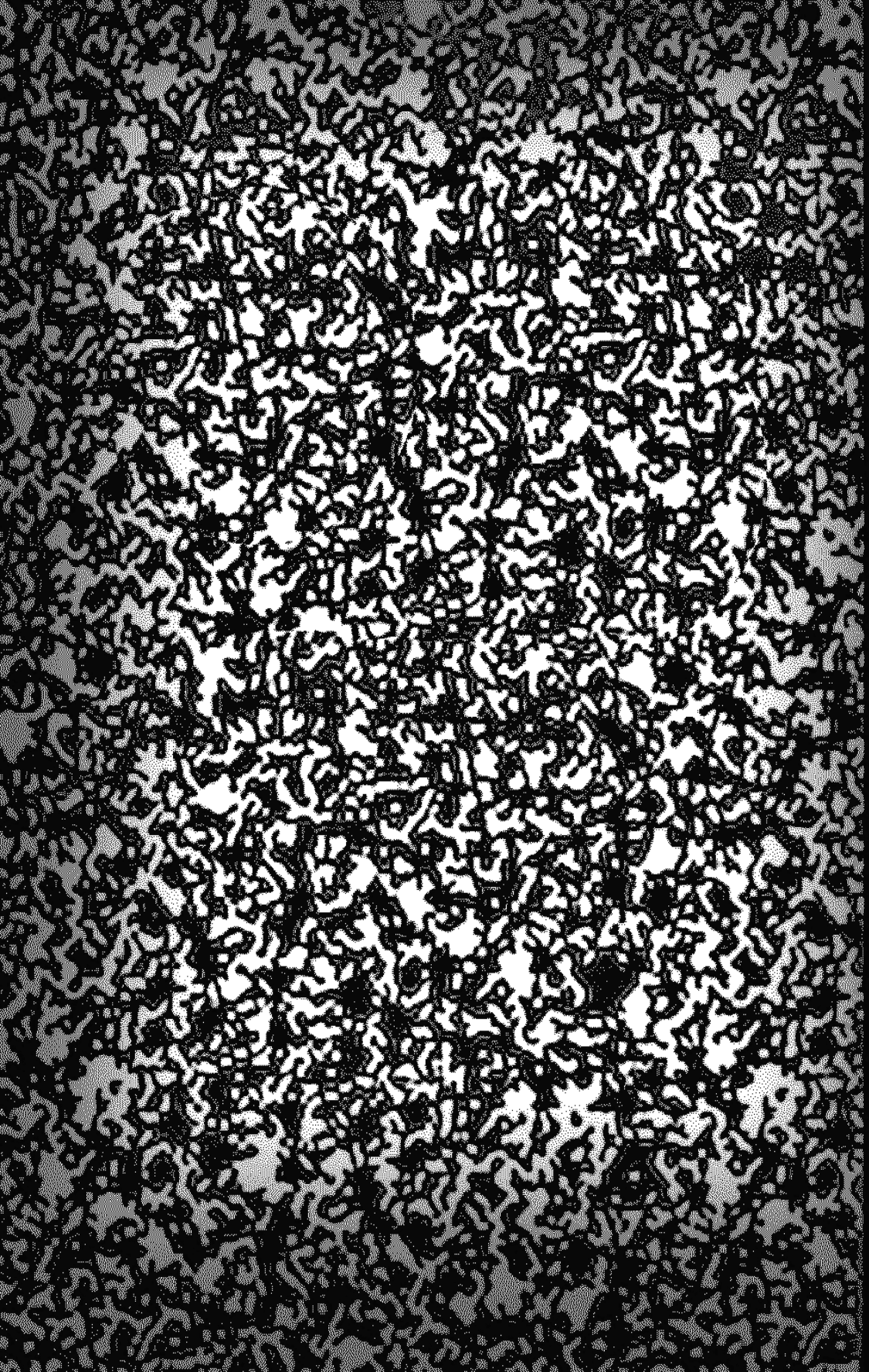


It's only been a couple weeks since the three of us traveled to the Willie Nelson concert. Our summer fun seems to have ended. Mother and I lie together in her bed enduring itchy blisters that are turning to scabs across our bodies. I have them on my face and tummy. Mother has them everywhere. Mother has carefully covered us in Calamine lotion to relieve our itching struggles. Daddy thinks we were probably exposed to Chickenpox some time on our road trip. I'm miserable and pouty. Mother tosses and turns on the bed trying to get comfortable.

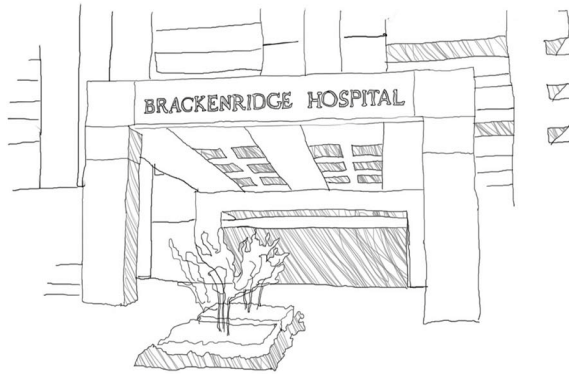
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Remembering the comfort her stone-carved Happy Buddha beads bring her, Mother asks me to fetch them from my Baby Billy doll. Feeling grumpy and moody, I reluctantly comply and trudge off in slow steps to fetch my doll. Finally, after Mother calls out for me several times, I slowly return, loudly sobbing in bewildered regret, clutching my doll but with no signs of the black carved beads. Unintentionally, I've lost her Happy Buddha treasure and sense I've done something very, very bad. The thought of making my Mother cry turns me inconsolably miserable. Back in her bed, I snuggle into her arms sobbing, "I'm sorry." She softly whispers not to worry but I hear her sad, soft sigh and feel what I imagine are her wet tears on the back of my neck.

The chickenpox rash keeps me unhappily bed-bound for many long days. Mother begins to feel much better before I do, leaving me alone in bed as I ponder if I'm really responsible for losing her precious Happy Buddha beads. Even though she doesn't question me again, I often think about how it is my fault that I made Mother so sad.



# 10



Brackenridge Hospital  
601 East 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas

~October 31, 1974~

Finally, the Walker family's sweet dreams about the arrival of their precious baby were about to become reality. Mony began to experience mild labor pains a little past midnight, and the whole family cheerfully proceeded to Brackenridge Hospital the next morning. Stella was told that she would get to see her new brother or sister very soon. While Mony was being monitored by nurses, Harold sat giggling with Stella in the waiting room about all the happy playtime they would have with their new baby. But moments after the birth, Harold was urgently summoned to Mony's side. Thankfully, a nice nurse's aide was available to sit with Stella and amuse her with numerous children's picture books.

They never imagined that all their hopes and dreams of promised joy could be horribly shattered and replaced by the terrors of a devastating birth. The birth had not been difficult, but the actual arrival of their new son revealed quite staggering birth defects. Harold and Mony clutched each other's hands tightly and stared in combined shock and disbelief at the

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painfully obvious, unimaginable disfigurement of their new baby boy. Their own horror and grief mirrored in the faces of the medical staff in the delivery room. The baby's deformities were quickly detailed in the doctor's delivery notes, and then he was quickly rushed away from the stunned and distressed parents for closer examination in the nursery. Thankfully, this hospital was well known for its prestigious newborn care.

Harold and Mony were left alone in her recovery room, too speechless to make sense of their personal disaster. Their wet, swollen eyes met, but no words were exchanged. Any decision on their son's name was forgotten and wouldn't be addressed for several days. Endless tears continued to flow down their burning faces as they realized that there was no way to undo this ordeal or even begin to hope for a solution. Mony finally whispered in a shaky, forlorn voice for Harold to take Stella home. As Harold slowly left the room, attempting to dry his eyes with the twisted cuff of his sleeve, she turned her face away toward the wall and sobbed uncontrollably.

Many days later, when it was confirmed that Mony and baby son would finally be discharged from the hospital, Harold realized that they must decide upon a name for their son before they presented him to Stella. Without much contemplation, they hastily agreed upon Shane Lee Walker, a combination of their middle names.

Home again, Mony became endlessly preoccupied with her new son's birth defects. Her priority was to heal the many red, jagged lesions on his face, arm, and leg. She applied prescribed ointments to his swollen wounds and dressed them with precisely applied gauze bandages. At other times, she removed the bandages and exposed the wounded, scarring skin to fresh air for a time before she carefully, lovingly bathed him and applied more ointment and new bandages.

It was a never-ending routine. Shane, extremely fussy, resisted any touch, loudly screaming out at the top of his lungs and flailing about in jerky

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motions with his left index finger and thumb. He also seemed to have major digestive issues. No matter how carefully Mony fed and burped Shane, he reacted within minutes with fierce, painful colic evidenced by his tightly contracted tummy muscles and even more shrill screams of distress. Upon the onset of Shane's screams, Stella ran in terror down the hallway and hid.

Mony's attempts to include Stella in holding and feeding her new brother resulted in predictable frustration, eventually ending with all three of them crying in unison and Stella running off again to hide. Even though Shane was usually swaddled in soft baby blankets so Stella wouldn't notice his bandaged limbs, she was still terrified of the lesions on Shane's face and his malformed eye. Displaying sheer panic, she recoiled from touching his face. When coerced to kiss her brother, she would only do so from arms length, barely kissing the very tips of the fingers on his normal right hand.

Even while Shane was plagued with intense pain from the many open sores positioned from head to toe on his left side, he was also plagued with just as many internal, twisting pains from colic and indigestion. The only sleep Mony got was in the rocking chair placed inches from Shane's crib, where he fitfully slept for short moments before once again waking with cries of distress. Stella no longer spent time in her parent's bed. Harold no longer felt the warmth of Mony lying next to him in their bed at night. They both lay awake in their own bedrooms listening to Mony hum her lullaby from down the hall in the nursery.

Harold and Mony attended Shane's many doctor appointments. Doctors assured them that his lesions—which they describe as necrotic-hemorrhagic bullae on his left deltoid region, quadriceps, and lower left facial area—would eventually heal, becoming less swollen and red as time went by. Special care needed be taken to avoid infections while Shane's lesions were healing. There would be hypo-pigmented scarring, but it would be minimal if Mony tended the wounds fastidiously with exacting care in the manner they prescribed to

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her. Doctors discussed the hypoplasia of Shane's extremities with muscular atrophy and the critical condition of his severe clubfoot that would most likely require surgery to correct just as soon as his lesions had healed. However, because of significant muscle atrophy, his parents needed to devote special attention to exercising his weak leg continuously as he grew.

Other critical conditions were Shane's limp left arm and his severely disfigured, shrunken eye. Shane would probably only have minimal use of his arm; his doctors feared nerve damage had caused partial paralysis of the lower part of the limb and fingers. Focus should be made on working with him to hold things with his thumb and only opposing finger on that hand. Finally, upon inconclusive testing, doctors reported that they also feared that Shane would have no vision in his left, shrunken, angular-directed eye that revealed a noticeably large cataract. The condition was called microphthalmia. They would retest vision in his eye when he is older. He appeared to have normal vision in his right eye. Finally, in summation, doctors remarked that there was no conclusive evidence of the actual cause for Shane's birth defects.

As Mony mournfully tended her disfigured son, she worried incessantly about the potential clubfoot surgery that Shane would have to endure if he was ever to have a chance at standing upright and walking independently. While she comforted Shane in her rocking chair, she sadly pondered whether all this devastation was a result of a genetic defect or something else. She had an expanding mental list of possible situations that could have caused Shane's severe birth defects but confided them to no one.

Silence in the Walker household was fraught with unspoken worries about Shane and their unexpected, forever, life-changing catastrophe. Fearing similar possibilities with future pregnancies, Mony carefully avoided all intimacy with Harold. Harold, distraught with concern for his entire family, felt inadequate to provide the needed support for his family to help anyone,

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including himself. Stella, in order to avoid contact with her parents or baby brother, hid silently in her bedroom or in the dark corner of the pantry closet under the bottom shelves. The massive change in her parents caused Stella to feel responsible. Her life was filled with devastating sadness and guilt as she tried to figure out all the things she did wrong to cause this never-ending crisis.

Harold's guitar now sat unattended in the far corner of their bedroom, just as Stella's Baby Billy doll was hidden and forgotten in the picnic basket. Joy, of any kind, was not possible in this broken, divided family. When Harold was home, he could be found strolling through the overgrown, weed-filled garden during the day or sitting alone outdoors at night in silence, sadly staring up at the abundant, steady stars shining in the dark country sky. Stella mostly sat silently looking out her bedroom window either waiting for her Daddy to get home or watching her Daddy sit outdoors alone in darkness.

Mony was always attending Shane. Oddly, the only melody now heard in the Walker household was Mony quietly humming her own soulful, wordless lullaby that she apparently composed to express her broken heart for her baby boy. She had no words to describe the pain she shared with her second-born child as she attempted to soothe them both. She hummed the loudest as she applied lotions to tenderly soothe the painful lesions on his skin while he screamed in agony.

Mony continuously, lovingly caressed him and softly kissed his disfigured eye for which she had no solution to mend. If there would ever be an answer to whether this eye had sight, it must wait. There were more severe problems to attend to now. Every waking minute of the day, Mony nursed Shane's painful sores, sadly anticipating that when they healed, her baby must undergo surgery suggested by his pediatrician to align his twisted clubfoot. She mourned that this would surely cause additional, new pain and distress to her already painfully distressed baby boy.

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Long, anguish-filled months crawled by. Mony only left the house when she took Shane to his many doctor appointments. Harold did all the shopping and errands after work. Stella avoided contact with Shane by hibernating in the pantry closet and only appearing from time to time to watch for her Daddy out the window. The only sounds heard were those of Shane's incessant crying accompanied by Mony's soulful, hummed lullaby. The winter passed with no holidays celebrated at the Walker house.

Eventually, many months later, Shane's skin lesions were pronounced healed enough by his pediatrician to undergo the previously suggested surgery for clubfoot, which produced intermingled feelings of gratitude and dread. Then, seated in the office of a highly recommended orthopedic foot and ankle surgeon, Harold and Mony listened as he gave a long detailed narrative that he supported with superfluous medical terminology that included the actual medical term for clubfoot, *talipes equinovarus*.

Noticing the dire concern on the puzzled, distressed faces of Shane's parents, the doctor promptly interrupted himself, starting over with simple descriptions. The surgeon carefully described in detail Shane's abnormal shortened tendons and ligaments on the inside of his lower left leg, which led to his foot turning inward. His tight Achilles tendon contributed to his foot rigidity. Actually, his clubfoot was not an uncommon birth defect, although a startled Harold and Mony had never known of a single case themselves. They listened intently as the doctor described three options.

In the '70s, surgery was becoming the most popular option. The most widely used procedure, postero-medial release (PMR), was the extensive surgical release of tight, contracted soft tissues of the clubfoot, which gave the patient a foot that appeared almost normal and functioned well in a short amount of time. The surgeon did comment that some of these surgeries, in followup studies, revealed that there was a possibility over time for the foot to become painful, stiff, and show early arthritic changes. Mony shuddered.

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A conservative option, called the Kite method for treating clubfeet, included a series of manipulations and castings of the lower leg and foot followed by night splinting with the feet held in dorsiflexion and slight abduction. The surgeon noted that some of these actual cases had proven unsatisfactory due to inaccurate manipulation of the foot and use of short, below-the-knee casts that proved inadequate to promote and hold the correct position of the foot. This method involved the patient sometimes having to wear plaster casts for up to two full years until the deformity was corrected. Mony shuddered again.

The final method described to Harold and Mony had actually been implemented in the 1940s, primarily because clubfoot surgery often resulted in permanent, painful deformities over time. This last method, the Ponseti technique, combined about four weeks of conservative manipulation casting, then a small surgery in the form of an Achilles tenotomy, finally followed by up to four years of a foot abduction brace to prevent relapses. This technique had been slow to catch on in popularity because of the lack of family commitment to consistent, corrective brace wearing for several years.

The Ponseti technique wasn't currently the most highly favored method. The surgeon heavily stressed that success of this technique depended highly on complete family understanding about what was involved in the casting process and how critical it was that the brace must be worn correctly and consistently. Parents needed to be aware that this treatment method required a serious, ongoing commitment from both parents. Harold and Mony, sombered by this information, asked for more details.

The Ponseti procedure would require Shane's foot to be manipulated to correct positions followed by serial applications of a long-leg plaster cast that needed to be changed every 5 to 7 days and might require up to four different castings. This would possibly require sedation if Shane was not cooperative during the process. Mony was pretty sure that Shane would require sedation.

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Then, a tenotomy of the Achilles tendon would have to be performed to correct the remaining contracture. In Shane's case, that procedure too would probably require an operating room.

After the final cast was removed, Shane would be put immediately into a foot abduction brace to prevent relapse. The brace would be made with shoes securely attached to a bar about the width of Shane's shoulders and set at specific angles. The brace would need to be worn 23 hours a day for the first 3 months and then only while sleeping (12 to 14 hours a day) until the age of four. The greatest problem with this method was the child's intolerance of the brace and lack of family support for correct daily wearing of the brace. Physical therapy during the bracing process helped patients with gait training and muscle strengthening. The surgeon then additionally noted that this actually might be a preferred method since Shane was already several months old. Harold and Mony held each other's hands tightly and together shuddered one last time.

That night, after Stella and Shane were finally asleep, Harold and Mony sat together at their red and chrome dinette table discussing the various treatments for Shane. Having been shrouded in isolating silence ever since Shane's birth, they at last finally reached out to each other in order to decide upon options for his dangling clubfoot. They felt compelled to agree on his particular treatment in order to avoid adding even more guilt to that which already hung heavy over their heads. They intended to explore every option and decide which medical approach they'd choose together.

Many hours later, the first brilliant rays of morning sun shone across a clear cloudless sky through the front window of the home at the end of Reese Drive, brightly reflecting across the weary but confident faces of Harold and Mony. It revealed new hope now apparent as they joined hands together across the table, vowing their united decision as they reviewed their conclusions. The fastest clubfoot correction required surgery but might be

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unsuccessful long term, resulting in limited motion and continuing pain later in Shane's life. Together, they dismissed the PMR surgery. Mony breathed a sight of relief since she had always harbored many misgivings and fears about extensive surgery to his foot.

The Kite method had a more conservative approach than surgery but also seemed inconclusive over the long term. It even involved wearing a cast continuously for up to 2 years. Harold could not begin to imagine Shane, just recovered from painful skin lesions on his clubfoot, to now be forced to wear a leg cast continuously for that long.

The Ponseti procedure required great family commitment, especially to support Shane's wearing of a leg brace until he was four years old. Gazing hopefully into each others eyes, they knew they could pull together to accommodate the tedious leg brace, and lots of ongoing physical therapy for Shane. Although this choice meant Shane would have to endure four years of night time restraint wearing a leg brace, it would be well worth it if there was a possibility that Shane could walk independently and pain free before he started school. By choosing this method, they were also choosing their united commitment in Shane's treatment plan. Some of their own pain that had been separating them seemed now to evaporate as they united in this extremely difficult goal for Shane's independent mobility. They held hands and squeezed tight. Once again, they felt the intense love and attraction between them that had been unexpressed since Shane's birth.

11



**Naturally Smarter Pet Supplies**

Tomlinson's Feed & Pet Store  
908 East 49 ½ Street,  
Austin, Texas

~March 29th, 1975~

Finally, the pleasant, nearly forgotten, fresh spring breezes and enticing sounds of nesting birds chirping from the live oaks lured the family outdoors in hopes of a reprieve from their long confinement in the overwhelming, stale sadness indoors. The season had changed. The thick, green wild-flower-filled lawn promised a soft resting place.

Shane's painful body wounds—now completely healed—left behind slightly discolored scars that were seldom noticed, except that when he screamed in anger or pain, they turned bright red. Normally, his scars were completely concealed beneath his long-sleeved toddler shirts and the long, white immobile cast now on Shane's left leg that was remolding his defective clubfoot. The plaster cast kept Shane a prisoner in its grasp, causing him to scream in the very intense anger or pain that Mony desperately tried to avoid. The plaster cast thus also effectively kept Mony a prisoner. Now more than ever, she spent every minute trying to soothe Shane. A baby blanket was always partially draped across his face to conceal his disfigured left eye that

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still seemed to frighten Stella.

It was, however, a hopeful, new season—an opportunity for a new beginning and a chance to start a new garden that was currently overrun with thickly entwined weeds since no cold- weather root crops had been planted last fall. It was the Saturday before Easter, which came early that year.

While glancing through the *Austin American-Statesman* that morning, Harold had noticed a newspaper ad that suggested some small possible enjoyment for his family in a quarter-page ad for Tomlinson's Feed and Pet Store on East 49<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin. Their Easter sale that weekend featured pet rabbits. (Even in his own solitary sadness, Harold often noticed Stella staring longingly toward the empty rabbit hutch in the backyard.) Tomlinson's was only about 12 miles away. After consulting with Mony to determine whether the whole family might benefit from such an outing, they cautiously loaded up the station wagon for the shopping adventure. Mony made sure they had Shane's colic medicine along with food, diapers, and several toys for Shane on board. Of course, Harold kept it secret from Stella that a pet rabbit would be involved with their adventure.

The station wagon had a new seating arrangement. Harold had reconfigured the second-row bench seat by installing an infant car seat that had been slightly modified with extra padding to accommodate and support Shane's clubfoot leg cast, which held his left leg immobile from his toes to over his knee. In the mid '70s, advocacy for children's car safety finally began to make an impact. People began to think seriously about using car seats and buckling in their children although there was not yet a law addressing mandatory seat belts for either adults or children.

Harold had purchased a General Motors Infant Love Seat advertised as having adjustable shoulder straps and gently supporting the infant upon a reclined surface that provided support for the head and back. The "facing-the-rear" position gave added protection. Harold thought Shane, prone to anger

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because he felt restricted by his leg pinned in that tight cast, might travel more relaxed in a reclined car seat rather than in Mony's embrace for any length of time. This proved to be true and allowed the family to venture out more often with more confidence.

Today, Harold drove, Mony and Shane shared the second-row bench seat with all his necessities close at hand, and Stella was quietly perched as always in the third-row, rear-facing seat (less her abandoned Baby Billy doll). She remained stoically occupied with the view behind the station wagon, relieved that Shane, who had been lulled to sleep by the motion of the station wagon, was not screaming at that moment. Stella sat still as a statue, intent on not making any sound or motion that might accidentally awaken Shane.

Upon parking in front of Tomlinson's, Harold enticed Stella to enter the store with him, "Stella, wouldn't you love to come with me to check out all the unusual things in this store. You've never been in a feed store before."

"No Daddy, I'll just stay in the car," refused Stella worried that the whole family was going inside.

"Stella, sweetheart, Shane is still sleeping quietly. He and I will wait here in the station wagon while you have fun shopping with Daddy," mentioned Mony convincing her daughter that this would be a great opportunity for Stella and Harold to be on an adventure alone together.

Stella finally nodded and agreed to carefully climb down out of the back door of the station wagon that Harold held open for her. She nervously entered the store, fiercely holding onto Harold's hand while glancing back at the station wagon.

Squawking, screeching, and fluttering from within birdcages just inside the store's front door immediately caught Stella's attention; she gazed with interest at the brightly colored talking parrots greeting her. Harold eventually coaxed her further back in the store, where they discovered a pen filled with the young bunnies featured in Tomlinson's Easter sale. Stella tightly squeezed

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Harold's hand once again, looked up toward his face, and actually smiled shyly. This was the first smile Harold had seen on his daughter's face in over five months. Something stirred within his joy-deprived heart. A tiny bunny became a love offering that encouraged her to smile once again.

With great effort, Stella reviewed each and every bunny until she determined that a white one with long, brown floppy ears and brown circles around his eyes was her perfect bunny. When she held this particular bunny in her arms, he wiggled its nose, sniffing her fingers in acceptance and trust. Stella immediately whispered his new name, "Billy Bunny". She could hardly give up Billy Bunny in order for the storekeeper, who introduced himself as Marty, to place him securely in a cardboard box with breathing holes.

"Don't forget that your new pet needs some special bunny food, too. He doesn't eat scrambled eggs and bacon, like you do, for breakfast," chuckled Marty as he reached over and grabbed a bag of rabbit pellets on display next to the bunny pen. "If you happen to have a garden, you can also feed him lettuce greens." Stella decided to make sure they planted more lettuce to share with Billy Bunny.

As Harold and Stella were leaving the store, he spotted another shelf in the back where ladies' western cowboy boots were on sale. He walked over and discovered a cowgirl-style turquoise boot with coral and green stitching outlining a braided daisy with ivy design across the toe and up the tall shaft of the boot. Harold considered them a perfect match to the bohemian dress Mony wore the first time he saw her. In his imagination, he fancied Mony dancing with him again in that dress wearing these fancy boots. Though such a dream was probably a long way off, Harold bought the boots to let her know he still saw her as a beauty and had hopes for renewed romance.

Mony must have read his mind because when she opened the box in the station wagon on the way home, she also giggled for the first time in five months. Picking up one of the fancy boots, Mony slowly ran her fingers

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across the daisy design. The leather felt cool, smooth and soft to her touch. The smell of well-oiled new leather filled the air as Mony pressed the tall shaft of the boot against her cheek and shared the same vision as Harold. In her imagination, she fancied Harold tightly holding her waist as he romantically dipped her backwards with a kiss at the end of a lively two-step.

As Stella cheerfully chattered the whole way home about her Billy Bunny, Mony looked forward and saw Harold watching her in the rear view mirror. She gave him a thankful smile and blew him a silent kiss. Harold's heart warmed for a second time that day. Maybe things were finally starting to look up for the family. Their worrisome pilgrimage in the family station wagon had been a fulfilling adventure after all.

Just as that thought entered Harold's thoughts, Shane, entirely exasperated with the confinement of his cast, started screaming at the top of his lungs. He reached forward, pounding so hard at the cast in rage that Mony was sure he would injure his arm. Stella huddled forward with her arms tightly wrapped around the pet bunny box; her fearful but silent sobbing left teardrops on the top of the box. She quietly whispered for Billy Bunny to please stay extremely quiet so Shane wouldn't notice him. Harold continued to look straight ahead, driving as fast as was safely possible in order to get home as fast as they could. He realized at that moment how difficult the next four years might truly be. There was indeed a huge challenge looming ahead of them all in their efforts to increase Shane's chances to walk with any degree of normalcy.

The next day, Easter Sunday, also started out quite pleasantly for the family. Billy Bunny munched on pellets in the now happily occupied hutch in the backyard. Mony had suggested to Stella that she might pick a little lettuce from the garden and place it in the hutch as an Easter snack for her pet. Stella alternated from bending down over the low rabbit hutch gazing at Billy Bunny to hurriedly fetching more lettuce.

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Before starting work on his garden plans, Harold offered Stella an observation bench that he'd lovingly nailed together from old 2 x 4 boards stored in the utility room off the carport. The observation bench was designed low, just a foot off the ground, but the 5 ft. long and 3 ft. wide bench could accommodate any possible position of a relaxing Stella, who was quite content to use it as a perch from which to watch Billy Bunny.

Mony appeared with some leftover house paint and color crayons. As Harold spent the day clearing the garden of weeds and planting tomatoes, green beans, peppers, and more lettuce, Mony painted the top of the bench a soft tan, the color of their house, and then painted the legs a bright teal, the color of their shutters. After the paint dried in the warm Texas sunlight, Mony outlined with crayons the shapes of doves and flamingos on the bench seat, which Stella remembered were just like the birds Mony had drawn on the magnificent kite a few summers ago. In that moment, Stella was thrilled with this attention from both Mony and Harold.

"I love you, Mother and Daddy," she called out at the top of her voice with her hand raised, waving her red crayon.

Mony then retreated to the shade with Shane and rested on a quilt; she arranged pillows to prop him up and support his stiff leg cast. A few short minutes later, he became angry, screaming and kicking his strong leg against the restrictive, tight cast on his clubfoot so hard that his facial scars flashed bright red again. Mony feared Shane's cast was causing him extreme irritation and that the cast might become damaged with all his kicking. Harold sighed as Mony gathered up Shane, who was quite hard to balance with his cast and his kicking, and retreated indoors. Before disappearing into the house, Mony stopped at the back door and glanced first at Stella, occupied with her new observation bench near the rabbit hutch, and then at Harold, who realized when he caught her look that she seemed to appreciate him providing Stella with the loving attention Mony herself had no time or

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strength left to give.

At least Stella and Harold found some measure of peace outdoors together that day. Stella colored in the outlines of the birds on her bench with her favorite color crayons while she kept an eye on her Billy Bunny in his hutch. The garden now had long straight rows of seedling plants slightly waving in the breeze and the rabbit hutch was no longer unoccupied. The observation bench was just right for Stella to watch her Billy Bunny while contemplating what a perfectly marvelous creature he was.

In the days and weeks ahead, Stella and Harold often found themselves outdoors, even if Mony and Shane (now bound by a leg brace worn 24 hours a day) stayed indoors. Harold in his well-tended, straight-row garden, bent over his hoe, purging weeds as if his life depended on it. He discovered that if he worked himself to a sweat, he was able to forget his troubles; often, his recurring headaches seemed to disappear while working in the garden. Stella and Billy Bunny got on famously. Her bunny became very tame, mostly due to the many handfuls of lettuce and other greens that Stella fed him from the garden. She often sat on her observation bench next to the hutch stroking her bunny's velvet-brown, floppy ears as he sat peacefully in her lap.

The family attempted to adjust to the storm that hovered over and around Shane. His temper was filled with frustration over wearing his restrictive leg brace. With outdoor distractions, Harold and Stella spent long hours together, retreating to the house only at sunset. Even after dark, Stella would often lean on her windowsill watching wild rabbits from the neighborhood hop along in small groups toward the garden. She suspected that they enjoyed the lettuce as much as Billy Bunny did. She didn't mention the intruding wild rabbits to her parents.

Soon fall, with cooler days and various garden produce like potatoes and carrots to harvest, enticed Mony and Shane once again outdoors, with Shane's repositioned clubfoot firmly held in place with his leg brace. Stella,

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suspicious of potential anger episodes from Shane, appeared quiet and apprehensive when Shane was placed on his quilt, and Mony invited Stella to join them with her Billy Bunny. For nearly an hour, Shane, with his own toys stacked around him like a fortress surrounding his stiff leg brace, appeared happy and content. Gradually Stella relaxed on the absolute farthest opposite side of the quilt and fed handfuls of lettuce to Billy Bunny who ate every leaf of lettuce and sniffed her fingers for more.

Eventually her usual apprehensions eased somewhat, so Stella, eager to get more lettuce for Billy Bunny, jumped up and quickly scurried over to Harold in the garden. Shane immediately found her departure somehow completely distressing. He was alone now on the quilt, and in his explosive fit, he started throwing his toys one by one off the quilt onto the grass. Then Shane launched himself backward on the quilt and kicked his legs, securely braced together, straight up, then crashed them down hard on the quilt. Frozen in her tracks, Stella instantly realized that with all his toys tossed aside, the only other object on the quilt with Shane was Billy Bunny, who, curious, innocently hopped in his direction.

With his strong right arm, Shane quickly grabbed what he thought should also be his toy. Mony, only one step away, was still too far out of reach to prevent Shane from seizing Billy Bunny by his soft, brown floppy ears. The startled hostage rabbit screamed out a shrill screech never ever heard before by Stella. In defense, Billy Bunny leaped in panic, accidentally scratching Shane's clutching good hand and leaving multiple, bleeding abrasions as Shane howled in even more fear, pain, and anger.

"No!" shrieked Stella as she collapsed face down to the ground between rows of carrot tops and potato bushes, covering her eyes and ears with her arms as she lay unmoving. Mony immediately dropped to the quilt, her arms outstretched for Shane. Harold, right behind her, scooped up Billy Bunny as Mony scooped up Shane and rushed indoors to tend to his bloody scratches.

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With the rabbit now safely hiding in a corner of its hutch, Harold returned to where Stella lay prone in the garden surrounded by bent over carrot tops crushed by her fall. He found her red-faced—deeply, but noiselessly, sobbing.

That night, after everything settled down, Mony and Harold reassured a disbelieving Stella that Shane was not hurt badly. The scratches were only minor and would disappear in a day or so. Shane, drained of all energy, had already taken his bath and was sleeping soundly in his bed, still wearing his stiff leg brace as prescribed. Stella, now alone in her bedroom, also had taken her bath and was wearing—but not comforted by—soft, cotton, pink-daisy pajamas. Her hair, still wet, had been pulled back and braided. She was supposed to be sleeping but she sat looking out her bedroom window, watching the wild rabbits approach the garden. Once again she was overcome with guilt, like so many times before. Shane and Billy Bunny had both been hurt because she left her brother alone with her rabbit for just a second.

Stella knew her parents were asleep because the TV was off and the house was quiet. She had been thinking a very long time. She loved her Billy Bunny more than any of her other possessions. With tears rolling down on her cheeks, she pressed her nose against the window, looking out at the garden and feeling her relentless pain.

Quietly tip toeing down the hallway, Stella, armed with Harold's flashlight from the pantry closet, quietly unlatched and slowly pushed open the back screen door. With the beam of the flashlight illuminating her path toward the rabbit hutch, Stella made her way carefully across the yard. She sat for a long while upon her home-crafted observation bench.

"I love you Billy Bunny. I'm so sorry that Shane was mean and pulled your ears. I know it hurt you really bad," Stella whispered. "I just know that when Shane is mad you have to stay away from him or you might get hurt."

Finally, she slowly latched the rabbit hutch, offered Billy Bunny one last lettuce leaf from the garden, and lovingly lifted out her beloved pet. While

## Hear My Soul Sing

giving him hugs and kisses, she slowly carried her pet rabbit to the edge of the garden and gave him final instructions.

“Wait for the wild, neighborhood rabbits to visit the garden,” she advised him, “Then, please hop away fast with them and find a new home where you won't be hurt ever, ever again by my mean brother Shane.”

Stella quickly hurried back into the house so she wouldn't interrupt the wild rabbits on their nightly visit to the garden. By the time she returned to her bedroom and leaned her nose against her window to look out for Billy Bunny, she discovered that he had already disappeared from sight.

The next morning, Harold noticed the swinging, open door to the rabbit hutch. He saw some half-eaten lettuce still in the rabbit cage that not been there when he had placed Billy Bunny back in his cage the night before. Sitting down on Stella's observation bench, he considered his daughter's reaction to Billy Bunny's squeals when Shane grabbed him. He knew that she felt guilty about Shane's scratches and was also worried that Shane might hurt her pet again. Looking for Stella in her bedroom, Harold noticed his flashlight hidden behind daisy-printed curtains on the windowsill and left it there without comment. He understood all too well about feeling guilty. The rabbit hutch would remain empty, and Stella would stand guard nightly from her window, watching for signs of her floppy-eared rabbit among the wild, neighborhood rabbits.

Harold started frequently checking on Stella during the night, often finding her asleep as she leaned up next to her window with her nose pressed up against the glass. He would carefully carry her to her bed where he would lovingly tuck her in and sit quietly watching her sleep as he tried to think up solutions to all their problems. Father and daughter were frequent nighttime observers, he the stars overhead and Stella the garden pathway below them.

Judy K Johnson

Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



# 12



Hancock Center Shopping Plaza  
1000 East 41<sup>st</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas

-Recalling August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1975-

Fiercely protesting, I refuse to go shopping with Mother and Shane. She wants to go to the Hancock Center Shopping Plaza located off I-35 north of downtown Austin and the University of Texas. Today is the first day Shane is free from wearing his leg brace 24 hours a day. He now must only wear it at night when in bed, so Mother promises that Shane, with his new freedom, will probably be very

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happy all day today. She entices me with the proposition of shopping for new school clothes. In a few weeks, I'll be starting school, spending a half a day at Sunset Valley Elementary. She tells me we'll drop Daddy off at work, so it will just be the three of us going: Shane, Mother and me! We can take the stroller for Shane. We can stop for lunch. We'll all be happily shopping together!

What if people notice Shane's weird eye? This always happens when we're out in public. Often, kids my age hide behind their parents when they see Shane's eye. I really don't blame them. It's pretty scary, especially if he gets upset and starts to scream out loud. Then the scars on his face turn bright red again. If he gets really mad, Shane wildly waves his arms as he screams, and everyone notices his hand with only a thumb and one finger. People stop and stare. Everything gets very, very quiet except for Shane's screaming. Even Mother gets very quiet. Usually, we immediately go back to our station wagon and drive home without talking. When we get home, Mother takes Shane to his room and rocks him a long time while humming her Shane

song. I hide in the pantry closet by myself in the dark.

I don't know what to do, I just know I don't want to go out shopping with Shane and Mother. Then, Mother reveals her new idea to me. She explains that Shane's doctors recommend that whenever he goes outdoors, he should wear sunglasses to protect his cataract eye from the sun. She reaches in her purse and pulls out a new pair of cute kid's Scooby Doo sunglasses. Placing them on Shane, she steps back and waits for his and my reaction. I'm quite surprised, but Shane, still enjoying his freedom from his leg brace, doesn't seem to mind at all and doesn't yank the sunglasses off in instant anger. I decide that these sunglasses are pretty neat. As I look closer, I realize that Shane's weird eye is almost impossible to see with his sunglasses on. What a relief!

Mother also places a new, orange rainbow-style Houston Astros baseball cap on Shane's head. It's bright orange with an embroidered blue star and white "H" on the front. The bill of the cap shades the rest of his face completely. When I turn to Mother, I see that she is smiling, waiting to hear

## Hear My Soul Sing

me agree to go shopping, just the three of us happily together.

I don't get to sit in the third-row seat of the station wagon, which I always prefer. I must sit next to Shane's car seat in the second-row bench seat since Mother's driving. She explains that I need to be "Mother's Helper" and pass Shane his toys or bottle as he needs them. This keeps me quite busy because Shane's never happy with anything for very long. Mother instructs me to keep my voice happy and even to sing to keep him happy. I'm very, very good at being "Mother's Helper" I've discovered that it's one of the very few things I can do to make Mother smile for a minute, but it can be really exhausting.

As we park in front of Sears near the courtyard and fountains at the center of the shopping center, I start to get a little nervous about what we are attempting to do, but Mother confidently unloads Shane's stroller and diaper bag loaded with all his necessities from the station wagon. Then she easily settles Shane (without leg brace), who's still sleepy from the ride, in his stroller. I'm relieved to see

Shane is currently happy with his sunglasses and ball cap. Turning to me, she asks if I'm ready to go shopping. After a moment of doubt, I slowly nod my head and we're off to tour Sears.

I start off walking glued to Mother's side behind the stroller. She insists on exploring the little girls' clothing department, and eventually I agree to start looking at dresses hanging in the section with my size. Shane is surprisingly quiet. I am very thankful, but I'm also very careful not to disturb him.

Amazingly, I have a wonderful time trying on shirts, pants, skirts, dresses, shoes, socks, and even pretty underwear with little pink daisies, which I love. It's fun to see Mother smiling at me. Realizing that we've made a lot of purchases that need to be carried to the station wagon, Mother decides that it's time to have lunch at Wyatt's Cafeteria. I even manage to skip a little alongside Mother as we head to the main exit along with several other shoppers. I decide that I can trust Mother when she says that everything will be okay when we go out in public.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Just then, I notice another girl about my age staring at Shane, pulling on her dad's arm as if something is terribly wrong. I turn toward Shane and realize that his Houston Astros baseball cap and Scooby Doo sunglasses have fallen off his head, exposing his scary eye. Quickly, I grab up Shane's baseball cap, placing it back on his head with two little tugs to make sure it won't fall off easily again. When I bend over to retrieve his Scooby Doo sunglasses, Shane suddenly slumps forward in his stroller with his arms and legs twitching and jerking. Then he lurches backward in his stroller, hitting his head. His baseball cap flies wildly off to the floor again. The girl screams and jumps behind her dad, who grabs her shoulder and leads her quickly away. Shane oddly doesn't cry out at all.

"Mother!" I scream. She instantly drops to her knees, getting very close to Shane's face. Immediately, she grabs Shane up out of the stroller and holds him tightly against her shoulder. She instructs me to put our shopping bags in the stroller and quickly push it behind her as we run out the exit toward the station wagon.

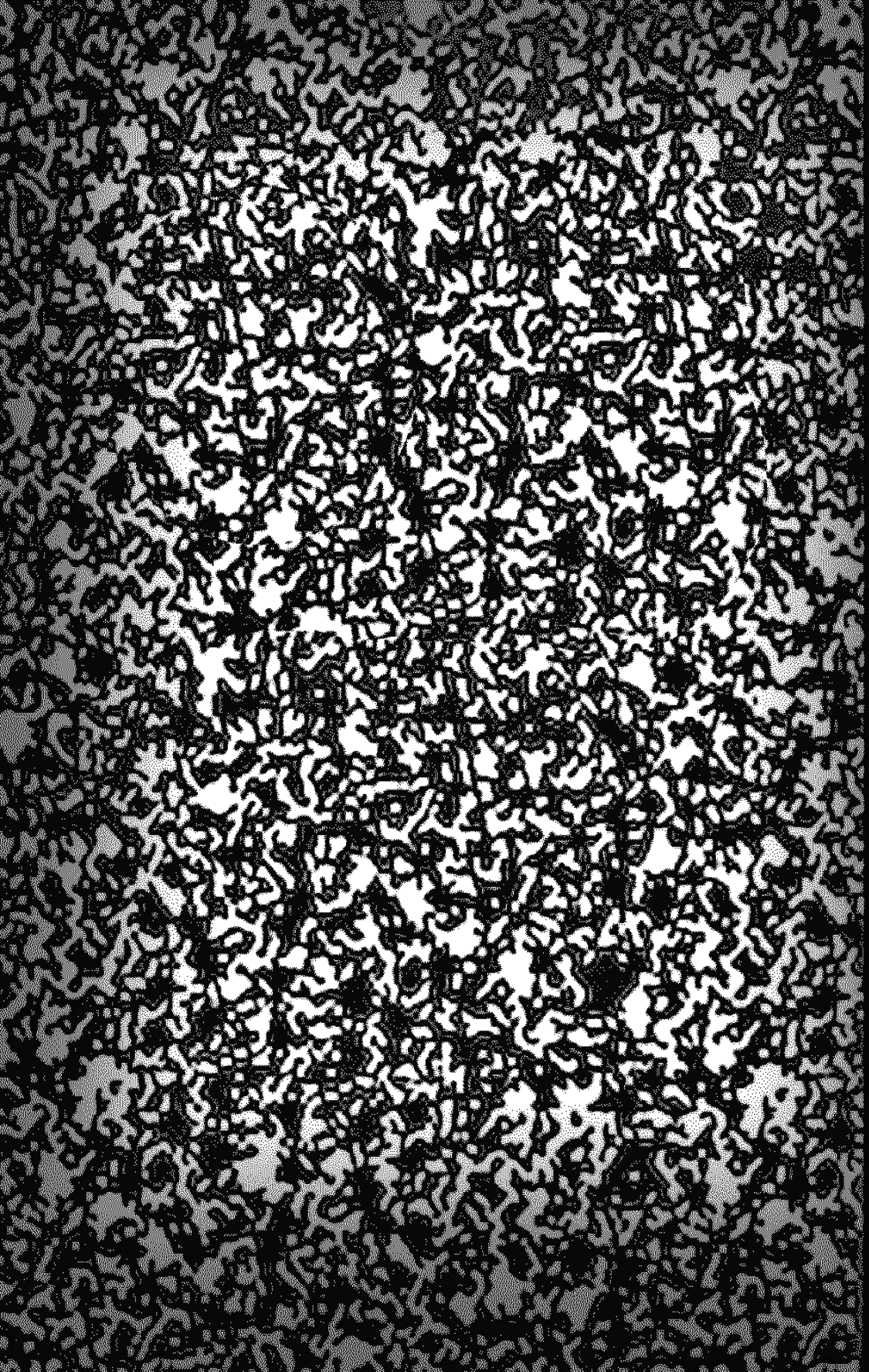
Mother races our station wagon out of the parking lot. I don't realize it yet, but she's headed to Brackenridge Emergency Room. Shane, in his car seat, again becomes very still. Mother keeps telling me to keep his face turned up so he can breathe. I'm really scared to touch him, but I'm even more scared not to.

Soon, we're running through the doors of the Emergency Room. Mother carries Shane toward a medic who places him on a hospital gurney and hastily wheels him down the hallway. Mother runs alongside, trying to explain everything about Shane in a hurry. I'm led by a nurse's aid to a waiting room where I sit, silent and still. I feel sure that somehow when I tugged that baseball cap tightly down on Shane's face, I caused all his wild shaking. I feel extremely guilty about hurting my brother. Now I must be a very good girl, be really quiet, and not disturb anyone. I sit with my hands folded tightly in my lap, Shane's Scooby Doo sunglasses still in my grasp. The nurse's aide offers me coloring books but I politely decline.

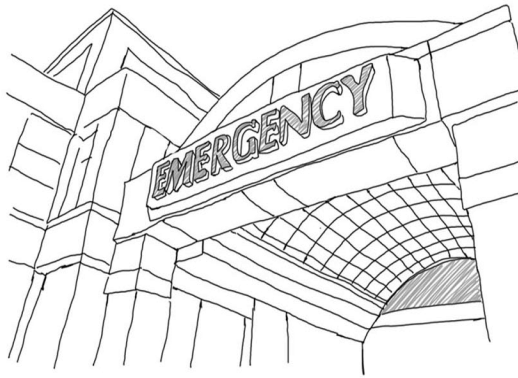
It seems like forever until I see Daddy running in

## Hear My Soul Sing

terror through the glass doors of the Emergency Room. As he runs to me, I see that, just like me he's really scared. I guess Mother's wrong about it being okay for us to go shopping.



# 13



Brackenridge Emergency Room  
601 East 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, TX

~August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1975~

The ER nursing staff conducted an EEG (electroencephalogram) on Shane, who was hooked up to leads from his head to a monitor. Harold and Mony stood close by Shane who was lying on an elevated hospital bed still trembling slightly. They tried to comfort him as they stared at wavy lines moving across the monitor which, they were told, were Shane's brain waves being recorded. He had been given an anticonvulsant medication to control his seizure that, while it successfully calmed the seizure, left him extremely lethargic and sleepy. Harold and Mony waited for doctors to talk to them.

"Probable reoccurring, tonic-clonic seizures is the currant diagnosis," advised a neurological specialist called in to consult in the Emergency Room. He seemed to be frowning as he stared down at Shane's medical report. "The tonic phase consists of a contraction of the limbs followed by their extension and arching of the back, which lasts 10-30 seconds. The clonic phase follows and consists of a shaking of the limbs in unison. It's not yet determined if Shane's seizure was a reflex seizure triggered by specific stimuli such as

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flashing lights or sudden noises. Shane's seizure might have been a consequence of some other as-of-yet undiagnosed complication."

Once again, both Harold and Mony were frightened to the point of trembling despair. Shane's external visible birth defects were hard enough to accept and manage. They knew that any additional, invisible threat of spontaneous seizures would plague their thoughts continuously. The idea that even more issues would arise as Shane grew older was enough to leave them feeling totally helpless and inadequate to manage their lives.

"I'm prescribing Shane a seizure medication based on his age and weight. You'll need to take him to your regular pediatrician for blood tests every two weeks in order to monitor its effectiveness. The correct dosage for Shane will be confirmed by these tests," remarked the ER doctor.

"Is it possible that Shane will have more seizures in the future?" questioned Harold, still in shock over the day's events.

"He may have one or two until we determine the exact dosage that Shane requires," answered the ER doctor as he looked up from his paperwork for the first time. Then, realizing the parents standing before him were quite upset over their boy's seizure, he tried to reassure Harold and Mony by adding, "If this medication doesn't work, there are many alternative medications that we can try until we find one that will be effective."

Wanting to make sure that Harold and Mony carefully monitored Shane's health, he also added, "You know, seizures can also be brought on by low fever or illness. Seizures can take many forms, ranging from extreme stillness and staring off in space to violent body convulsions."

He handed them a brochure which contained detailed instructions on how to identify and manage a seizure when it did happen. He recommended that they always err on the side of caution and bring Shane to the ER if he should have another seizure.

Any confidence or bravery that Harold and Mony had slowly managed to

## Hear My Soul Sing

develop toward overcoming Shane's medical problems immediately evaporated into thin air.

It was not exactly comforting to go home with Shane after he was discharged from the ER. Everyone was on pins and needles, just like they had been when Shane was brought home with such worrisome birth defects. However, the day had been long and everyone was now exhausted. Quietly and cautiously, Mony took care of Shane while Harold took care of Stella. Soon both were fed, bathed, and put to bed.

Harold and Mony sat together on the living room couch for several long minutes holding hands in complete silence. Realizing that they needed a distraction to calm their thoughts and worries enough to become sleepy themselves, they turned the television on and tuned it to CBS. *The Carol Burnett Show*, which featured Harvey Korman and Vicki Lawrence, two of their favorite characters, was on. Mony offered to make some popcorn since they had not yet eaten.

When Mony went to find their electric popcorn popper stored in the pantry closet, she noticed something stuffed into their picnic basket in the far corner. They hadn't used that picnic basket in such a long time. Casually lifting its slightly-ajar hinged cover, Mony stared in horror at Stella's precious Baby Brother Tender Love doll hidden within the basket along with two other unusual items also belonging to Stella.

Harold, noticing Mony's extended absence, searched for and found her sitting at the dinette table. With her face buried in her hands, she wept forlornly but in silence, not wanting to wake her sleeping children. In front of her on the table lay a bright red crayon, a pair of round tip child scissors, and Baby Billy.

The perfect anatomical doll, which, during happier times before Shane's birth, Stella had often used to practice caring for a perfect baby, lay there mutilated—exactly matching Shane's disfigurement. Several overlapping

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Band-Aids completely covered the dolls left eye. The doll's face, arm, and leg had scar marks similar to those of Shane. They were obviously made with Stella's crayon. The doll was missing three fingers on its left hand. Mony suspected that Stella had relentlessly struggled to remove Baby Billy's fingers one by one with her scissors.

Harold picked up Baby Billy, cradling the broken, discarded doll in his arms as he slowly, quietly sat down next to his beloved Mony. After a long silence spent just holding hands, they began an earnest conversation about their firstborn love child, Stella Harmony.

"Our sweet Stella always tries hard, never complains or gets into trouble," sighed Harold, "But it's obvious that she must need special attention."

"Apparently, she's hiding some bad feelings about Shane's birth defects that she doesn't dare express—just like she hid her Baby Billy after changing her once perfect doll into one that matched Shane," agreed Mony. "We need to realize that both our children have special needs and both require very special care."

Mony and Harold talked long into the night trying to come up with new ideas on how to make sure that Stella felt loved. They also reminded each other that they must make sure that they give Shane his seizure medicine as prescribed and take him to his pediatrician for checkups as often as needed. They found comfort in the fact that they had each other to depend on. They began to feel relieved when they realized that just identifying these problems helped instill within them a positive plan for their future. Mony and Harold finally felt relaxed and drowsy enough to catch some sleep just a few short hours before dawn.

# 14



Americana Theater  
2200 Hancock Drive  
Austin, Texas

~August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1975~

With Stella's birthday just days away, both Harold and Mony decided to create a special day for Stella without her having to worry or be embarrassed from public reactions to Shane. They decided that Harold would take Stella on an outing to see the latest Disney movie playing at the popular American Theatre on Hancock Drive, about ten miles from home. Mony would stay home with Shane and bake Stella's birthday cake for a celebration with birthday presents for her later. Harold planned to go to the evening performance; Shane would be sleeping when he and Stella returned home for this special intimate party.

Alongside Harold, Stella skipped in a hurry to get to the child-packed ticket-window line for the popular Disney film *The Apple Dumpling Gang*, a family Western comedy. The film was a hit at the box office. Stella, just as excited as the other kids, hurried through the American Theater lobby. She paused to gaze upward in amazement at a fancy glass-beaded chandelier glittering brightly overhead. Harold and Stella stopped only briefly at the

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concession stand for popcorn, M&M's, and two Coca Cola's before hurrying to their seats as the room darkened. Stella settled in her seat, snuggled up against Harold's shoulder, and passed every other M&M to him during a short cartoon before the movie began. As the movie progressed, Stella burst out laughing several times. Harold found himself smiling and treasuring this unique moment—the seldom-heard sound of his daughter's silly, bubbling laughter.

In between action-packed scenes, as he watched Stella happily engrossed in the Disney movie, Harold identified with one remarkable narrative in the movie which made quite an impression on him. Slick frontier gambler Russell Donovan remarked, "Well, there's one good thing about luck—it always changes. And I got a feeling mine is just around the corner."

Stella seemed to enjoy the fast paced, exciting adventure about three orphaned kids known as the Apple Dumpling gang. The setting was the California Gold Rush; a slick gambler named Russell Donovan (played by actor Bill Bixby) arrived in town and found himself taking care of a trio of orphans, the Bradley children.

Stella would tap Harold's shoulder and comment from time to time. "How did the orphans get their name, Apple Dumpling gang?"

Harold smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

As the movie progressed, the orphans found gold. A pair of bumbling holdup men named Amos Tucker (played by actor Tim Conway) and Theodore Ogelvie (played by actor Don Knotts) tried to steal the Bradleys' gold.

"I wish we could discover gold. Is there gold in Texas?"

Harold laughed and shrugged his shoulders.

Then the plot got even more intense. The orphans got kidnapped, and the gold eventually got stolen by another bad man Frank Stillwell (played by actor Slim Pickens).

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“Did all the bad guys go to the Gold Rush to kidnap kids with gold nuggets?” questioned Stella.

Harold put his arm around his inquisitive daughter.

“Honey, remember the orphans have a guardian to protect them.”

The movie ended with the precious gold nugget blown to bits, and the bad man arrested. Donovan, the remaining guardian of the Apple Dumpling gang, used reward money from Stillwell’s arrest to buy a farm where the reformed Amos and Theodore stayed on to work.

“See Stella, the Apple Dumpling gang gets to live on a nice farm in the country. The country is a great place to grow up.”

“We live in the country, don't we?” asked Stella. Harold nodded in agreement.

On their way home, bouncing with excitement on her favorite third-row seat in the station wagon, Stella excitedly repeated the entire story line scene by scene, detail by detail, to a carefully listening, appreciative Harold as they hurried home to enjoy Stella’s birthday cake—stopping only long enough to pick up chocolate ice cream, her favorite.

Happily home, Stella raced into the house, anticipating balloons, party favors, and a birthday cake in the center of the red and chrome dinette table. Not seeing any evidence of a party, Stella continued down the hallway looking for Mony and hearing Shane scream at the top of his lungs. Arriving at Shane’s bedroom, she found Mony busy rocking and humming her special lullaby to him. Obviously, Shane had been very upset a long time because Mony looked very tired, and he was still angrily pounding Mony with his fist. It was hard for Mony to keep Shane still in her lap because he was wearing his nighttime leg brace. When she turned to Stella, Mony didn't realize that there was a thin trail of blood on her cheek from a scratch inflicted by Shane when he was struggling against the stiff brace. Mony wondered if Shane can really endure four years of having to wear his nighttime leg brace. She was

## Judy K Johnson

even more worried that his fits would bring on another seizure, so she continued rocking and humming, rocking and humming without stopping. Stella stared in angry disbelief at the streak of blood on Mony's cheek. Shane always ended up ruining everything.

"Honey, let's have some ice cream, okay?" Harold sounded a little sad himself—the evening was turning out to be so upsetting for Stella. He realized that the ice cream was beginning to melt as he held the quart container which no longer felt cold to his touch. Regretfully, he wished he had just planned to buy a birthday cake in the grocery store bakery.

In a very rare moment of rebellion, Stella, unable to conceal her emotions, angrily ran to her bedroom and slammed the door behind her. However, once there, she felt remorse and guilt. Clearly, Mony loved Shane more than her. When Shane got angry, Mony sang to him forever. When she got angry, no one sang to her. Stella had been promised a fun-filled day for her birthday, yet here she was alone, scared, angry, and feeling guilty all at the same time.

Stella couldn't help but wish that she was the one being rocked forever by Mony. Instead, she felt just like an orphan in the Apple Dumpling Gang. Unfortunately, unlike the movie, Stella felt she had no one to save her from disaster.

What enthusiasm Stella had acquired at the movie theater with Harold had completely dissolved into the accepted sadness that seemed to be the tone of her life forever. Without changing into her pajamas, she lay across her bed in remorse until, worn out by all the events of the day, she soon fell into a disturbing sleep. Her usual night terrors plagued her sleep throughout the night. She never realized that Harold had found her asleep, tucked her under her bed covers and sat on the edge of her bed watching her for hours.

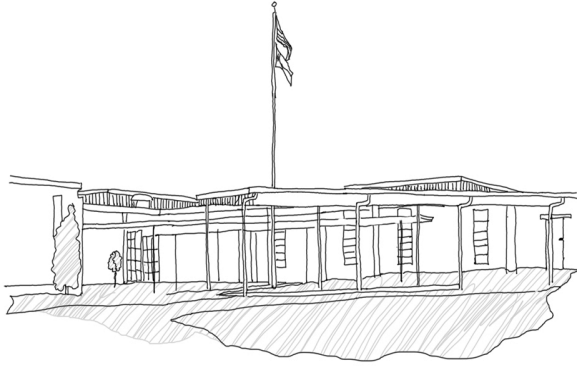
Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



15



Sunset Valley Elementary  
3000 Jones Road  
Sunset Valley, Texas

-Recalling September, 1977-

Going to school begins my new life experience of freedom. I don't have to be told twice to get out of bed and get ready for school. I do refuse to wear bright, colorful outfits, instead choosing dark, solid colors. I don't want to stand out in any way. I don't complain when Mother combs my hair, pulling it back securely into a tight ponytail. I don't fuss about eating all my breakfast quickly. I do everything with

## Hear My Soul Sing

a smile on my face in order to get ready for school faster. I'm in the second grade. Daddy hasn't left for work yet when it's time for my bus, so he walks me down to the end of our driveway and has a little pep talk with me about having a good day. It's just me and Daddy, together looking forward to the day ahead.

My bus driver always has a smile on his face as he greets me with a "Hi, cutie!" The other kids are already talking together about what might happen at school today. I'm the quietest kid on the bus, so no one seems to notice me. From the back seat of the bus, I curiously watch everyone, learning how other kids act, and what they talk about. I usually sit by myself. I'm an observer trying to discover "normal" because I know that my family is not normal.

A couple of kids have brothers or sisters with them on the bus. I pay special attention to them. What is it like to have a "normal" brother? Sometimes, I'm really amazed because there are times that they do not get along together well. I thought I was bad because I didn't always

get along with my brother Shane, but it seems that not liking your brother is not as bad as I thought. I always thought that I was being really bad because I hate my brother when he screams in the middle of the night. Several times every night. I'm awakened as he cries, "Mama, brace off." Mother never gets mad, but I do.

At school, I pay close attention in class. I feel that I must always do my very best. I'm lucky I don't have problems like Shane. Also, I want to make sure that everyone knows that I DO NOT have problems. I want to be normal. I need to work hard so that I don't ever have problems like Shane.

I avoid talking about my family. I just stay quiet and don't share any information. Once in a while, I run into trouble if my teacher asks us to draw a picture or write a paragraph about our family. I usually don't mention Shane. I guess that's not telling the whole truth, but sometimes the truth is too difficult to explain. It makes me sad, worried, and embarrassed. I try very hard not to lie about anything else. I know telling lies is bad.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Mother comes with me to Open House at school to see my classroom, my teacher, and my schoolwork. I'm very worried. I try to tell her that it's not necessary to go, but she doesn't listen. When we walk into my class, my teacher comes up to introduce herself. She tells Mother what a great student I am. I hide behind Mother, like usual. I don't like people making a big deal about me.

My teacher invites Mother to walk around the class, and see my school projects. I pull on her arm, wanting to go home, but it's no use. Mother insists on seeing my desk and my work. Turning over several papers on my desk (all with excellent grades) she finally comes to my family drawing. She stops and stares a long time.

I tug hard on Mother's arm and plead to go home. On the top of the paper, I've written "My Family." Below the title is Mother on one side, Daddy on the other, and me in the middle holding both their hands tightly. There is no Shane. Mother frowns but doesn't say a word to me. I know she's unhappy. I never, never want to make Mother unhappy.

I can't help it, but I start to cry softly, which makes

me even more embarrassed in front of the other kids and their parents. I'm rubbing my wet eyes, and my cheeks are blushed and swollen. Thankfully, Mother suggests it's time to go home to check on Shane and Daddy. Mother actually never mentions the family picture to me. I think of it often, worried about making Mother so sad.

My teacher always says I act very grown up for my age. I'm puzzled over this until I realize that I do grown-up things at home to help Mother with Shane. We must make sure Shane is happy before we do anything else. I do all I can by bringing him toys to keep him quiet. It hurts my ears to hear him scream when he's upset. I wait quietly for Mother to do all Shane's physical therapy exercises to help him walk better and to help him use the hand with only a thumb and one finger. Shane always gets tremendously upset doing exercises. Mother calls it his little tantrum. I'm always very quiet when Shane screams. I know I don't have any problems compared to Shane. I don't want to make Mother mad.

Mother and Daddy don't make a big deal over most of

## Hear My Soul Sing

the things that I do well—like making good grades at school. They remind me that Shane will never be able to do things like I do, so we shouldn't make him feel bad because he can't. I don't want to make Mother and Daddy feel so sad about Shane, so I don't talk about some of the things I do—like being in my class play. I tear up the note that we're supposed to bring home that invites parents to come see the play during school hours.

I try very hard to succeed at school. I know that Shane won't succeed at many things, but I want Mother and Daddy to know that one of their kids is smart. I don't want them to worry about me. I actually feel a lot braver when I'm at school. I'm even proud to wear the school T-shirt, which has our school mascot—a large scorpion—on the front! I'm fine with wearing it because everyone wears it, and I don't stand out or get noticed. Our school colors are orange and yellow. The scorpion is orange! There are nearly six hundred students at Sunset Valley Elementary. It's very easy for me to quietly blend into the crowd of orange and yellow scorpion T-shirts.

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I learn the school song along with everyone in my class. It's very exciting when the Junior High band plays the school song. It makes me feel peppy and very powerful, although I've never seen a real scorpion:

Scorpions, Scorpions, Go, Go Go!

Sting 'em high, sting 'em low!

Sting 'em on the toe!

Yay Sunset Valley!

I work on posters and invitations at school about a Tasty Dinner, which is a PTA fundraiser. The posters are hung up all over the walls in the school hallways. The invitations are supposed to be taken home and given to our parents. The Tasty Dinner is a family event that invites everyone's entire family, so, of course, I intentionally lose the invitation on the way home. It "accidentally" flies out of my open bus window.

I do, however, tell Mother and Daddy about the Sunset Valley Elementary band concert. From time to time, we have

## Hear My Soul Sing

assemblies in the cafeteria that converts into an auditorium with a stage at one end. The school band plays at a few assemblies, and all the grades can attend. The band students play many different types of instruments, including drums, trumpets, flutes, clarinets, and even a couple of trombones. The band director stands in front and moves his baton to direct the students playing instruments. I really enjoy music, especially what I think of as peppy music. Bouncing in place to keep the beat, I instantly smile, which feels amazing and refreshing because I'm well aware that I don't often smile.

So much to the amazement of Mother and Daddy, I tell them all about an upcoming evening school band concert that also features the Sunset Singers, hoping that we can attend. I'm also hoping that Mother will get a babysitter for Shane, but I guess I'm still willing to go if Shane comes along with us. No matter what, I know lots of people will be there, and it will really be noisy, so maybe if Shane gets fussy, people won't notice. I mention to Mother that Shane should wear his Scooby Doo sunglasses and Houston Astros

ball cap like when we take him to doctor's appointments.

I'm hoping that band music will make Mother, Daddy and me all happy together like we were before Shane. I keep remembering all the fun we had when we went to the Willie Nelson 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnic before Shane was born. If we're really, really lucky, Shane will be in a good mood. I'm not too worried about seizures any more because Mother gives him special medicine every day, and now he doesn't have them unless he is sick with fever.

Of course, my parents are quite amazed by my enthusiasm for a family outing. They're well aware that I avoid outings at all costs, so they realize that this is an important opportunity to show me that our family can try to do things together. They decide that music seems to be the magic needed to win my participation and enjoyment.

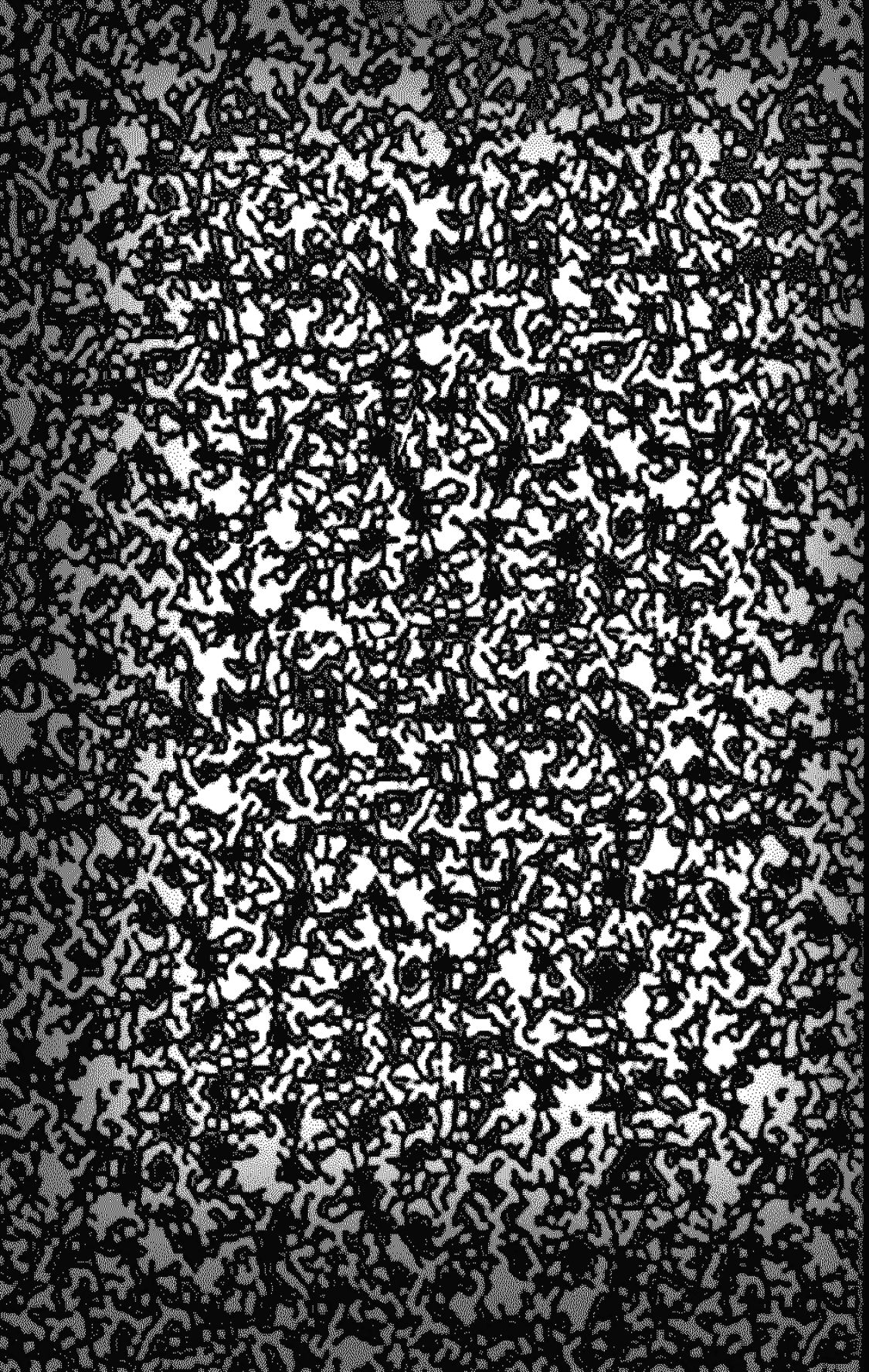
We're very lucky the night of the Annual Sunset Valley Elementary School band concert. Shane, without the constraints of his leg brace, is happy—so we can all be happy. I stay very attentive to Shane, handing him toys or picture books to keep him occupied. Shane actually seems

## Hear My Soul Sing

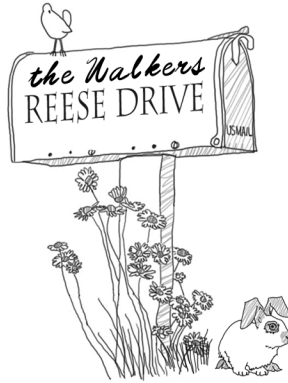
to be able to enjoy the music himself. The music is as peppy as I hope for, and it's very easy for me to smile the entire night.

Sadly, bad things start to happen when the concert is eventually over, and we leave the auditorium. An older boy who rides my school bus laughs as he yells, "Hey Stella, I didn't know ya had a Scar Face brother with a claw hand!" The kids all around him turn and stare. Mortified beyond words, I turn and run down the hallway into the girl's bathroom, thinking that I can't ever, ever come out again.

A few minutes later, however, Mother quietly opens the door, pleasantly calls my name, and explains that it's safe to come out. Daddy has taken Shane to the station wagon and we need to hurry to catch up with them. I worry that I've made Mother sad again, but I'm relieved for her understanding. The only thing that changes after that night is that now I always sit in the very front seat of the school bus so that mean boy doesn't have a chance to bully me.



16



Residence of Harold & Mony Walker  
Reese Drive,  
Sunset Valley, Texas

~November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1979~

Harold continued to bartend several evenings a week at the Armadillo World Headquarters, Austin's popular concert hall. He was friends with many musicians that played there such as Frank Zappa, the Pointer Sisters, Bruce Springsteen, the Grateful Dead, Joe Ely, Marcia Ball, and even Stevie Ray Vaughan. The Armadillo's eclectic concert calendar brought together different sectors of the community. It's most dramatic fusion mixed traditional country-music culture with urban blues and rock to produce a Texas hybrid character known as the "cosmic cowboy" and a hybrid music called "progressive country" (sometimes referred to as "redneck rock").

Harold would always remember a short conversation he had with Bobbie Nelson, who was Willie Nelson's sister and played fantastic piano in their band called The Family. They talked one evening while he was bartending, and Harold revealed that he was the sole provider for his family and worked two jobs so that his wife, Mony, could stay home with his children, especially Shane, who required diligent care to overcome his birth defects. Harold sadly

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confessed to Bobbie that he had long ago stopped playing his own guitar because of the immense grief and guilt he felt over his son's disfigurement, multiple physical disabilities, and neurological impairments. These included mental impairment and seizures that filled Harold with a constant fear of imminent disaster. He also discussed with sadness his daughter's similar distress over Shane's maladies.

Bobbie Nelson shared with Harold that no matter what kind of emotion she was feeling, ranging from joy to sorrow, she could always go to her piano to express herself. She actually felt comforted by her piano and affirmed that music has the power to heal. Harold made a point of remembering the conversation. He was a fan of Bobbie Nelson's piano playing and hoped that her message about the healing power of music could actually help his family one day.

Another of Harold's favorite piano players was Marcia Ball. She had played at the 'Dillo, but he, Mony, and Stella had also seen her perform at Willie Nelson's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Picnic in College Station before Shane was born. At the time, Marcia Ball played in a popular progressive country band called Freda and the Firedogs. Harold knew that she sometimes played at the Broken Spoke on South Lamar in Austin. Marcia Ball would often tell her audience about how she had actually set out for San Francisco in 1970 when her car broke down in Austin. While waiting for repairs, she fell in love with the city and decided to stay and perform her music.

Freda and the Firedogs broke up in 1974, but Marcia Ball started her own band the following year, called Marcia and the Misery Brothers. She felt more comfortable using her own name and would later change the group's name to the Marcia Ball Band. Marcia and the Misery Brothers were just as popular on the local scene as Ball's previous band had been. In 1978, Ball had her first appearance at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival.

Harold had read articles about Marcia Ball's music career. She was born

## Hear My Soul Sing

in Louisiana and her family was her first and strongest musical influence. Local Cajun sounds and the soul music she heard on local radio stations also played roles in developing her musical tastes. She began taking piano lessons at the age of five and would continue taking them until she was 14. Marcia Ball loved the rare times when her father would take her to the Mardi Gras parade in New Orleans.

Harold imagined what fun Stella would have going to a Mardi Gras parade, although their life now offered little chance of a trip to New Orleans. When Harold heard that Marcia Ball was going to be featured on the TV show *Austin City Limits* with Alvin Crow, appearing on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1979, he made sure that everyone in the family was gathered in front of the TV in the living room, ready to watch at the precise time it aired.

The kids had already been bathed and dressed in pajamas. Shane no longer was required to wear his brace to bed. Due to the persistence of his parents keeping his leg braced correctly, Shane's left foot at the end of four years of clubfoot treatment appeared nearly normal. He still suffered from extreme weakness and lack of flexibility, but Mony worked tirelessly every day assisting Shane with exercises to overcome these remaining problems. Shane walked with a pronounced limp, but he was able to walk mostly unassisted. For this achievement, Harold and Mony were both proud.

As expected, the jazzy, peppy music caught nine-year-old Stella's attention immediately. Within minutes, she was up dancing in front of the television set with the biggest smile on her face that Harold had seen in years. Shane, puzzled by his sister's emotional bliss, a rarity seldom seen at home, was totally preoccupied by the antics of his sister. He tried to imitate her lively dance moves but ended up falling over his weak tangled legs. This triggered the instant anger that always plagued Shane. Frustrated, he was convinced to sit still next to Mony for the rest of the show, though he was still mesmerized and jealous of Stella's joyful laughter and dance moves.

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Stella remembered and still loved Marcia Ball's signature moves. She remembered Marcia Ball bouncing on the piano bench to the rhythm of her lively music and swinging her leg as her fingers beat out a lively tune on the piano. As the show progressed, Stella moved closer and closer to the TV screen. Harold could see her fingers tapping as if she were actually playing a piano. When the music was the liveliest, Stella bounced and clapped her hands together.

Sadly by the end of the show, Shane was frustrated and angry that he couldn't make his hands clap or his legs dance as freely as his sister could. Stella, even in her bliss over the music, felt that Shane hated her because she did not have disabilities. After Marcia Ball ended her *ACL* performance with "Good Time Saturday Night," an exhausted Stella was more than ready to be guided down the hallway to her bedroom and helped into her bed. Her last words to Harold before she fell asleep were, "I really love that music, Daddy!" Those words stayed with Harold, and he began to develop an idea about encouraging Stella's enthusiasm for music.

Mony agreed wholeheartedly with Harold's plan. Since it was just a few weeks before Christmas, they decided to try to find a used upright piano and a piano teacher for Stella. Their first idea was to talk to her music teacher at Sunset Valley Elementary School. They were hopeful that Stella might start lessons with someone who she already admired. They were overjoyed when he offered to give Stella lessons at home, and he also knew of a used Kimball upright piano for sale.

Stella was at school a few days later when the piano was delivered. Harold and Mony decided to set up the piano in the sunroom off the back of the house. Harold happily realized that this would create the added advantage of allowing him to hear her practice music as he worked just outside the sunroom's windows in his garden. He figured Stella might be shy about performing for others at first. The piano also would be out of Stella's sight

## Hear My Soul Sing

until Christmas since she preferred to play alone in her bedroom (avoiding Shane's demands) most days after school.

On Christmas Eve, Stella, with eyes blindfolded, was led into their sunroom. Even when the blindfold was removed a quilt covered the piano, hiding it from her sight. Harold gave the quilt a quick tug, revealing the surprise piano to an ecstatic Stella who immediately jumped onto the piano bench and began tapping random keys one at a time. The rest of Christmas did not matter to Stella. She sat glued to her piano bench with her fingers playfully bouncing on one or two notes at a time for hours on end. When Harold looked in on her later, Stella was still playing her notes although they were now played with a couple of fingers on each hand at a much peppier pace. He saw Stella swing her leg like Marcia Ball, her apparent role model, in rhythm to her interpretation of a jazzy beat.

When her piano teacher started coming to the house weekly, Stella was rather shy, initially worried about interruptions from her brother. She knew Shane could ruin everything in a split second just by his distracting appearance or by his emotional outbursts. Consequently, Mony cleverly worked out a plan with Stella. If Stella made sure that she practiced every day without fail, then Mony would take Shane on a walk to Valley Creek Park across the street whenever Stella's piano teacher was scheduled to arrive for a lesson. Mony added that the repeated outdoor exercise would also be good therapy for Shane's motor skills.

Stella's first sessions were as discordant as one would expect from a new piano student, but Stella didn't seem to mind. Even though her harmony was slightly off, her rhythm would always bring a big smile to her face. Before long, Stella seemed to naturally pick up chords and melody. She never had to be told to practice because it was such an emotional release and brought her endless joy. Her piano teacher was wise enough to follow the advice of Harold and introduce some simple jazzy pieces to her lesson plan.

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Harold moved the handcrafted observation bench away from the empty rabbit hutch over to near the screen windows of the sunroom. There he often sat, leaning against the house, completely content listening to the sounds of Stella healing her long distressed emotions through her peppy, jazzy piano music. Just as Bobbie Nelson had suggested, Stella no longer escaped to the dark corner of the pantry to hide from her troubles. She now found it easy to skip past the pantry on her way to the sunroom, where her piano waited to offer her such healing joy.

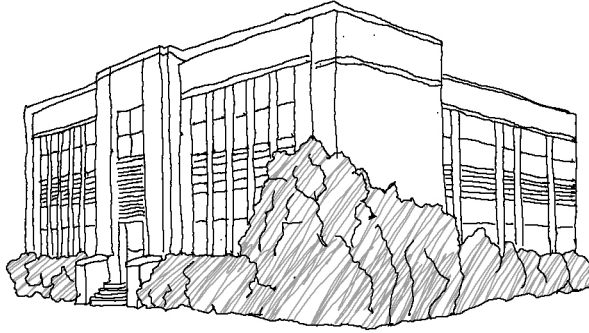
Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



17



Blackshear Elementary  
1712 East 11th Street  
Austin, Texas

~Recalling August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1980~

Since the beginning of summer vacation, I've been impatient for school to start up again, so I can get back to my preferred life at school and away from home. During summer vacation, I dread any public outings with the family, fearing that people will act weird when they see me with Shane. I look forward to staying overnight at my friends' houses, but I'm embarrassed when friends ask to come to my house, and I

## Hear My Soul Sing

always make up an excuse of why that isn't possible.

My magical daydreams about the start of a new school year happily fills my imagination until I realize that Shane is getting old enough to go to school himself. When Mother buys both of us "back-to-school" outfits and shoes, it dawns on me. She remarks that Shane will be going just half days to kindergarten, but Mother also reminds me that we'll be riding the bus to school together in the mornings.

This causes me to consider all sorts of terrible consequences resulting from the kids at school meeting my brother. I try to figure out how I can get to school some other way without riding the bus with Shane. I offer to walk to school but Mother says that's ridiculous.

Then one day, the letter arrives. I always retrieve the mail from our mailbox at the end of our driveway. That day, as I pause to pick a couple of pink daisies that Mother always plants at the base of the mailbox each year, I notice that one of the letters is from my Sunset Valley Elementary School. I start dreading what news it might contain about the upcoming school year.

Mother reads the letter immediately, then places it on our dinner table where important mail for Daddy is always placed. When I inquire about the school letter, Mother says not to worry, that we'll talk about it at supper with Daddy. I'm pretty worried again—my usual reaction is to obsess over situations and imagine the worst possible outcome.

When Mother observes that I can only sit and stare in grave concern at the letter, she decides to bring up the matter of the letter as soon as Daddy gets home from work that evening. I hold my breath as Mother starts reading him the letter that outlines desegregation plans for S.V.I.S.D. and also includes details for several field trips for parents and students to visit Blackshear Elementary before the school year starts.

Obviously concerned after reading the letter entirely, Mother and Daddy both become thoughtful as they start a quiet discussion about school plans that they say will affect me more than anyone else in the family. As far as school goes, the only worry I'm primarily concerned about is

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that Shane and I will be identified as "brother and sister" by the entire school this year. To my amazement, Daddy shocks me by saying that when Shane and I start school in the fall we will be riding different buses.

What? I'm in total disbelief. All I know for sure is that I'm starting fifth grade and Shane's starting kindergarten. Daddy goes on to describe some complicated concept called "school integration." He says that the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that Austin Independent School District must intentionally desegregate its schools. Mandatory cross-town busing for all grades is ordered to make schools more racially balanced. So far, this vague information makes literally no sense to me. Nor do I have any idea of how this directly affects me.

Seeing confusion on my face, Daddy smiles and makes an attempt to explain what Mother has just read in the letter. This is my first realization that not all schools are alike. Daddy explains that some schools have all Black or Mexican American children, and some schools, like Sunset Valley, have mostly Anglo students. I don't recall ever

having heard these terms before.

Now, it seems, all the schools must have equal amounts of all types of students. Daddy says this is more "racially balanced." Again, this means nothing to me. I just want him to get to the part where Shane and I ride different buses.

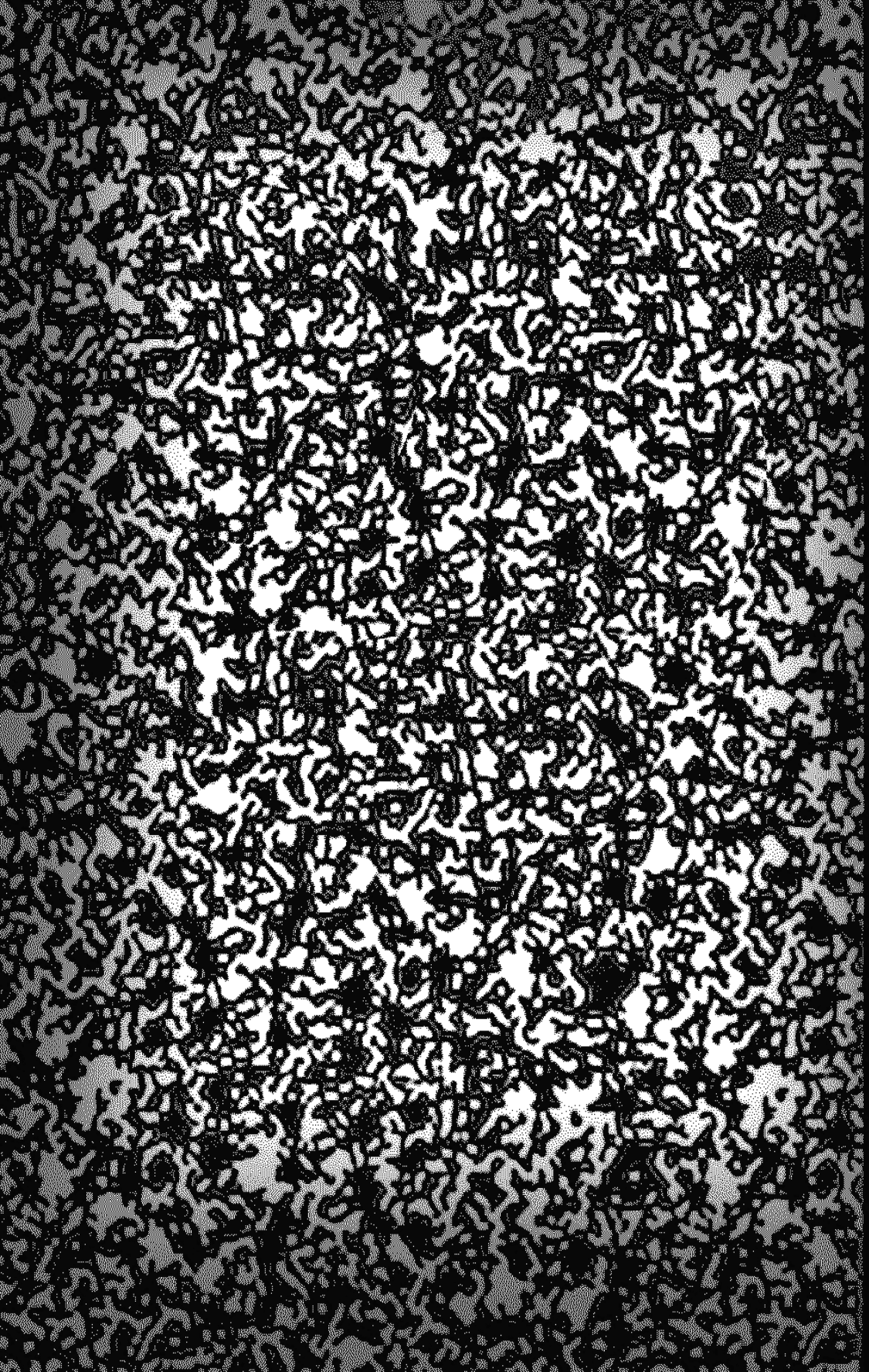
Daddy slowly gets around to the point that will directly affect my own school experience. Beginning in the fall, when school starts up again, students in Kindergarten through third grade will go to Sunset Valley, and those in fourth through sixth will go to Blackshear. Most of the Sunset Valley teachers for these grades will also be transferred to Blackshear, so students will essentially have the same teachers at Blackshear that they would have had at Sunset Valley.

I finally understand. This is about me going to a different school along with all the kids and teachers from my classes at Sunset Valley. I instantly start firing questions at Daddy. I'll be going to a new school? Shane will still go to Sunset Valley? We won't ride the bus together? I'll still be with teachers and kids I know?

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This seems like a perfect arrangement. My parents seem pleased about my flexibility and my lack of complaints about my school change. I'm actually cheerfully looking forward to attending Blackshear Elementary.

Once again, fate has unintentionally reinforced my avoidance of having to deal with my brother's circumstances. Instead, fate exposes me to the new experience of racial integration. I easily prefer embracing racial differences over interacting with my brother. (Although the reality of this racial solution just means my class and my teachers travel across town to Blackshear while Blackshear classes and teachers travel to Sunset Valley.) I love my nine-mile daily pilgrimage that takes about thirty minutes to arrive at Blackshear Elementary on East 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Every day seems like an adventure where I don't have to worry about being associated with Shane. Again, I feel my worries about my brother lifted from my shoulders. I'll also prove to my parents what a perfect student I am with my exceptional grades.





Whole Foods  
525 North Lamar Boulevard  
Austin, Texas

~September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1980~

When Mony drove up Lamar Boulevard on her way to pick up Harold, she noted with interest the grand opening of the brand new Whole Foods Market. She had already heard that this health food store was opening in a 12,500 sq. ft. building, which seemed really quite large compared to other health food stores. It seemed like a great place to explore. She was always trying her best to find the healthiest fresh foods in the area to feed her family, especially Shane.

She pulled into the parking lot since she was a few minutes early and decided she had time to investigate the new store. Before she knew it, she was engulfed in exploring all the appetizing produce, especially the fresh fruit and vegetables. She decided to splurge on some fresh apples that were at the perfect stage of ripeness. She knew her family would be pleased with a fresh apple cobbler—that very evening, perhaps—with a scoop of vanilla ice cream which always excited Shane's appetite just like his favorite peanut butter sandwiches.

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As she waited in line at the check-out counter, she recalled memories of how she spent hours upon hours showing Shane how he could be a little independent, and prepare his own sandwich in the kitchen whenever he felt hungry. This training, like lots of tasks that she set up for Shane, greatly improved his hand coordination and strength. She focused on teaching him family responsibility by showing him how to clean up the kitchen counter when finished. The bread and peanut butter were always located in the same spot in her pantry. However, ice cream was even more tantalizing to Shane and was reserved for when the whole family ate together at their dinette table and they enjoyed a dessert.

As she prepared to pay for the bag of mouth-watering apples, she noticed a sign taped to the side of the cash register: Help Wanted, Flexible Shifts, Employee Discounts. Each phrase seemed more appealing. She glanced about the store and noticed the employees, who all seemed courteous and happy with their work.

Walking back to the family station wagon, she pondered the fact that her youngest child, Shane, was going to kindergarten now. For the first time since his birth, she was possibly going to have some free time on her hands. She fully intended to be a very active participant in all his school activities, but that would surely not fill every hour of her day. The idea of working a flexible shift at a store with food discounts stayed in her thoughts as she continued her day.

Later, as Mony stood peeling and slicing the firm, juicy apples at the kitchen sink, she popped one of the slices into her mouth. As she savored the mouthwatering tart taste, she decided the apples were perfect for baking. She arranged the apples on the bottom of her baking dish and covered them with brown sugar, cinnamon, a touch of salt, and squeeze of lemon juice—one of her baking secrets. As she prepared the cinnamon oatmeal crumble, which she layered by generous handfuls on top of the fruit, she decided that it would

## Hear My Soul Sing

definitely improve the quality of her meals if she had an employee discount and could purchase these healthy, fresh foods as often as she desired.

True to her expectations, everyone licked their lips to capture every drop of melting vanilla ice cream on the still warm apple cobbler in their mouths. Breaking her rule of only one serving of dessert, she allowed them all to hand her their empty dessert plates, which she generously refilled with the freshly baked apple treat. Harold gave her a quick, surprised glance, but did not comment until later when the kids were safely tucked away in their beds—tired from their busy school day and full of Mony’s warm satisfying meal, which had them nodding to sleep as soon as their heads touched their pillows.

Harold hugged his Mony as they sat together relaxing on the couch and remarked casually about what might have made today special since she had served them all second servings of her delicious apple cobbler. She sighed as she started the conversation she had been practicing all day. She laid out all the thoughts that had occurred to her since she had stopped at the Whole Foods grand opening—especially stressing the increased income and the addition of better, more healthy foods to their family meals.

Mony knew Harold would not object to any decision that she felt was important. He knew that she always had their family’s best interest at heart, but for quite some time now, Harold had been concerned about Mony’s health. She always dismissed the dark shadows under her eyes as due to lack of sleep. She also dismissed her decreased energy as the result of never having time to relax. When the kids were safe in bed each night, Mony’s quick walk slowed to a snail’s pace, and she often just collapsed on the living room couch.

Harold tried to discourage Mony’s new idea of part-time employment, but she rebutted his viewpoint by pointing out the opportunity for good food the family could enjoy and for the money that could help with the heavy expenses of Shane’s therapy, medications, and possible cosmetic surgery. By the time

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they shared a third serving of apple cobbler together, served on one saucer with one spoon, he finally gave in to a trial phase of part-time employment for Mony. Harold wished that Mony would consider an option of her taking time for herself in her free time rather than always putting the family ahead of herself. But she was determined to try her plan.

Ten days later, Mony was hired part-time by one of the owners, John Mackey, who presented her with an apron uniform with “Whole Foods” embroidered at the very top. She happily trained to work in her favorite section, the produce department. Mony was able to set up a work schedule that closely aligned itself within minutes of the Austin bus service that picked her up within a block of Whole Foods and dropped her off at a bus stop within walking distance of Reese Drive. The bus ride often reminded her of when they had first moved to Austin and she worked at Viva Les Amis Cafe. Actually, her work schedule went virtually unnoticed by her family because she always returned home before the rest of them.

John Mackey was very impressed with Mony’s work ethic and the happy personality that she readily displayed to all the shoppers moving through her department. Customers left tremendous compliments about her advice and service. She often shared ideas for recipes and tips for combining various products together into a delicious gourmet dish. The sales receipts proved that on days when she worked, her department often had the highest sales. She also offered ideas to management on attractive displays and methods to keep customers eager to buy Whole Food items. Her boss often asked if she would consider a full-time position that might perhaps lead into management, but Mony always politely declined because of her strong commitment to her family. Shane and Stella became quite happily accustomed to finding delicious fresh fruit on the counter when they returned home from school, Shane from Sunset Valley Elementary and Stella from Blackshear Elementary. Mony expected that she would always work at Whole Foods

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because of her family's enjoyment of the fresh fruit and vegetables she bought on discount.

Since Shane was now attending school, when Mony wasn't working at Whole Foods, she was totally dedicated to finding treatment for Shane's vision issues. His early preschool examinations resulted in the diagnosis of Shane's severe mental retardation, so his pediatrician was never sure if Shane's reaction to vision testing was impeded by his mental capability. His pediatrician had been reluctant to make a definite diagnosis about vision in his left eye. Finally, forced by Mony, Shane's doctor scheduled multiple tests that were conducted by several specialists and came to the conclusive decision that Shane was completely blind in his left eye. Mony was crushed at the revelation that she could do nothing to salvage sight in that eye. Besides being horribly disfigured with an ugly, scarred eye socket, it was affirmed that the eye was totally and forever useless. The diagnosis left Mony under a guilty cloud of depression over what she considered yet another failure.

Fatefully, one day at work, Mony picked up the April 1981 *Rolling Stone* magazine from the magazine display at the checkout counter. The magazine reminded her of the past, when she and Harold shared a carefree love of music in their early romance. She longed to relive, if for only a few moments, feelings of young love without worry and decided to carry the magazine home to share with Harold that evening when the kids finally slept. It was the only time they had each day when they could sit on the couch, wrap their arms around each other and search for a way to help each other forget family worries.

That evening, it was if a ray of hopeful discovery enlightened them the moment they finished reading the *Rolling Stone* article "Ry Cooder: From Tex-Mex to R&B—Looking to the Past for Fame and Fortune" by James Henke. The article was about a musician they both enjoyed following. Ry Cooder performed with musicians Harold and Mony enjoyed such as Mick

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Jagger, Bill Wyman, Lowell George, and Nancy Sinatra in various arrangements of blues, gospel, calypso, Tex-Mex and country songs.

The article described Cooder as a brilliant bottleneck guitarist; his bending and blending of notes could make his guitar sound like it was talking or crying or laughing. The article recommended his instrumental version of Ike and Tina Turner's "I Think It's Going to Work Out Fine" on his 1979's *Bop Till You Drop*, which was the first fully digitally recorded album, a soulful song from a soulful album.

Harold and Mony read in amazement near the end of the article how Ry spent much of his youth by himself, listening to records and playing the six-string Martin guitar his parents bought him. Sports were off-limits because of an accident he suffered when he was four. Cooder explained that he accidentally stuck a knife in his own left eye. He was playing with this toy car when his hand, which was holding a knife, slipped. It was just a weird accident. His eye was damaged beyond repair and had to be replaced with an artificial glass one. Ry remarked how he felt very lucky that it happened at such an early age he was able to make adjustments physically.

Together, Mony and Harold stared intently at all of the photos of Ry Cooder in the magazine. It was nearly impossible to see that there was even a problem with his eye. Neither of them had ever known anyone with an artificial eye. Instantly, they were infused with new ambition for pursuing ways to help Shane feel normal in public. Mony eagerly planned to call Shane's pediatrician in the morning and request a referral to a specialist who could fit artificial eyes. Concealing Shane's ugly scars and cataract would be a tremendous improvement. They were determined to explore this new possibility quickly.

Maybe it was a blessing in disguise that Shane's eye damage was too severe to remedy. Shane, whose vision in his right eye was excellent, had always known only one-eyed vision. Harold and Mony carried the *Rolling*

## Hear My Soul Sing

*Stone* to bed and once again talked long into the night.

Within months, after undergoing minor orbital eye surgery, Shane was successfully fit with an artificial eye painted to identically match his right eye. Just days later, Harold and Mony sat with Stella and Shane for their first and only family portrait, which to this day is still displayed above the red and chrome dinette table in their dining area. The family portrait reveals radiant smiles on everyone's faces, although at the time of the photograph, Mony felt a premonition that disaster was close at hand and kept it secret from everyone.

Weeks later, a local weather crisis unexpectedly dealt a heavy blow to Austin that directly coincided with the beginning of the worst crisis the Walker family had yet to face and from which they wouldn't escape. A deluge storm on Memorial Day weekend resulted in the most damaging flood in 70 years. Damage across the city was estimated at \$35.5 million. Several hours of torrential rain quickly overwhelmed Austin's creeks and storm drains. Shoal Creek, with a typical flow of 90 gallons per minute, saw 6 million gallons of water per minute roar down it toward Town Lake.

The Walker family found it nearly impossible to get home that day because even Reese Drive was badly flooded. Thirteen people drowned on that disastrous day, May 24, 1981. An untold number were saved by police officers, firefighters, and other bystanders. Whole Foods Store suffered immense damage that ruined the store's entire inventory and most of their equipment. The loss was approximately \$400,000, and tragically, Whole Foods Market had no insurance. Amazingly, local customers, neighbors, and staff pitched in to repair and clean up the damage to the store property. Helpful local creditors, vendors, and investors assisted in helping the store recover and triumphantly reopen just twenty-eight days later.

The Walker family would not recover within the same time frame. Actually, Mony became doubtful that their family could even survive. Feeling

## Judy K Johnson

exhausted from the pressures that she unselfishly put upon herself, Mony was not able to volunteer at the Whole Foods Market recovery effort after the flood. Instead, she gave in to that small quiet voice that kept interrupting her private thoughts with a dire warning. She secretly scheduled a visit to her doctor. Thirteen days later, Mony knew the results of her medical tests and could no longer pretend that she was merely tired.

Mony sensed foreboding gloom surround her as she sat at the red and chrome dinette table and gazed up at their happy family portrait. She knew she must talk to Harold that evening. She had been told that she was in the midst of stage three breast cancer. She was wrought with fear, knowing she faced the battle of her life. There would be many attempts in the next few years to fight this disease, including surgery, chemotherapy, and even other holistic health methods, but Mony and Harold now anticipated that the future might never be kind to them again.

Mony discarded the idea of working away from home. During times when she felt strong enough, she focused entirely on improving Shane's chances for the most normal life experience possible. Her only outside involvement was being extremely active in the PTA in order to encourage and provide support for Shane's education and social acceptance.

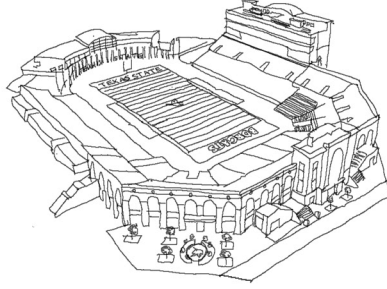
Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



# 19



Texas Memorial Stadium  
University of Texas  
2100 San Jacinto Boulevard, Texas

-Recalling April 1982-

I'm really excited about starting junior high in the fall, but today, Daddy and I sit in the lower Section 4 at the 50-yard line of the Longhorn side of Texas Memorial Stadium. As the opening ceremony begins, I focus intently on a group of about seventy-five attractive, orange- and white-dressed "Texas Cowboys" wearing chaps and cowboy hats with bandanas around their necks.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Daddy explains that the Texas Cowboys, a student service organization at the University of Texas, are providing their community spirit and leadership skills to the Special Olympic Games. They're promoting their high ideals of service to The Association for Retarded Citizens of Austin. I watch as they march into Texas Memorial Stadium ahead of the largest-ever Texas group yet of over 4,000 Texas Special Olympic participants; it's clearly quite an impressive sight that unfolds before me.

The athletes stream onto the field waving banners, pom-poms, and flags. Participants all wear the same type of T-shirt although there are many colors for different training groups. Some participants even do cartwheels and somersaults while other kids in wheelchairs come rolling across the field. An announcer comments over the loudspeakers that all the participants have already proven success in their sport by completing training and learning skills required to participate in these sports. Then, one of the Special Olympians carries a lighted torch around the field. Spectators rise to their feet cheering wildly. I stand

quietly next to Daddy, carefully observing every moment.

Daddy's eyes are straining to locate Mother and Shane, who should now be marching with the participants and volunteers out onto the field. At last, catching a glimpse of Shane's characteristic unbalanced limp, Daddy locates them on the outer edge of the formation marching toward the center of the field for the opening ceremonies.

Daddy is very nervous. He, as always, seems determined to protect his family. Like me, he certainly seems surprised at the number of people here today. His nervousness diminishes slightly when he catches sight of the beaming smiles on the faces of Mother and Shane. He keeps an ever-watchful eye on them, even telling me that he has thoroughly planned how we'll make our way to them in case of an emergency. From time to time, Daddy nods at me, quietly preoccupied next to him. He seems unaware that I have a lot of emotions flowing through me.

Determined not to stare continuously at Shane, I instead gaze across the stadium at all the assembled participants and then at the thousands of family members

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sitting in the stadium seats around me. I'm trying to figure out how I really feel about being in this particular crowd, and I watch to see how other families react to the competitions of mentally retarded and handicapped kids. Looking here and there for girls about my age, I'm pleased that no one recognizes me. Curiously gazing at the spectators, I know that they must all have family circumstances similar to mine. I still feel intensely shy throughout most of the events of the day.

I occupy myself by mostly watching the Texas Cowboys coordinate with hundreds of volunteers and coaches offering encouragement and congratulations to the Special Olympians as they cross finish lines. All the volunteers seem genuinely happy to help with competitors. I feel unsure and amazed at the scene unfolding before me that includes my own Mother and Shane. Mother, who volunteers through Shane's Sunset Valley PTA group, has even commented to me that helping other people as much as she can makes her happier than she ever thought possible. As I watch her work with the Special Olympians, I realize I

haven't seen Mother this happy since Shane was born.

I look down at the field and watch Mother, always smiling, help the athletes move between various events, hugging each and every one as they move about the football field. Glancing around, Daddy points out the different events, such as the standing long jump, the high jump, walking and running races of various distances, races that include hurdles and relay races, the shot put, or throwing tennis balls, and, amazingly, even an obstacle course for kids in wheelchairs.

At a certain point in the event, Daddy taps my shoulder, points toward the end of the field and commands, "Watch. It's Shane in the 10 meter run." Following his direction, I focus immediately on where Shane is standing at the starting line and then on where Mother is standing at the finish line and cheering him on.

Shane starts out strong. He's in his best physical shape from weeks of training that Mother's encouraged. There are about a dozen boys in this event. Shane stays in the middle of the pack as a couple boys begin to fall

## Hear My Soul Sing

behind. The crowd is cheering them all on to the finish line. About half-way through the race, one boy close to Shane stumbles and falls toward Shane. That boy recovers, but Shane instantly goes down hard on his knees.

Almost simultaneously, Daddy fiercely grabs my arm, prepared to run down to help Shane. I freeze, unable to breathe. However, just as Daddy starts moving toward the aisle, we see the last runner in the race catch up to where Shane kneels on the track, head down. That runner stops and gently holds Shane's arm to slowly help him up. Together, they hobble side by side to the finish line, the very last to cross.

Mother, waiting there at the finish line, grabs Shane up in a huge hug, then quickly crouches down to examine his knees. I see Mother look up in our direction and give us an "OK" sign. I hear Daddy let out a big breath that he's been holding the whole time. The boy who helped Shane stays close by him with his arm around Shane's shoulders.

Mother, after seeing that Shane is not injured badly, makes sure that the two boys get their ribbons for

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completing the race. Several Texas Cowboys crowd about Shane and his new friend, cheering their achievement. Then I realize that the spectators around me have all been watching my brother first fall and then recover. When the two boys proudly hold their ribbons up in triumph, the crowd everywhere around me cheers loud and long. I look up at Daddy. He's laughing and crying at the same time. Somehow, I let out my own long sigh as I rub my fingers across my wet eyes. I hadn't realized until then that I was crying too.

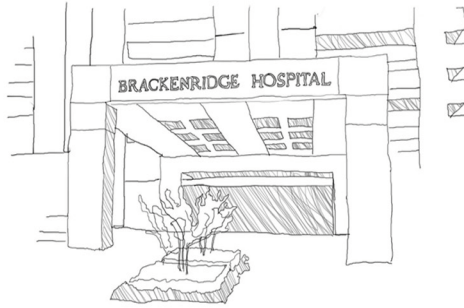
Two days later, I'm stunned to see a newspaper clipping taped to the refrigerator door in our kitchen. It is an article about the successful Special Olympics in Austin, Texas. The article includes a large photo of Shane being helped by his fellow competitor finish his race. Mother has never taped anything to our refrigerator before but that picture stays on display a long, long time. Shane often points at it when he makes his peanut butter sandwiches in the kitchen. He also often points to the healing scabs on his knees and announces loudly to anyone that might be near that he fell

## Hear My Soul Sing

down but he finished the race. I can see Shane's efforts at the Special Olympics make Mother and Daddy feel so proud. I really hope my parents are proud of me, too.

Am I somehow jealous of my brother for getting so much attention? I normally don't want any attention for my achievements because Shane's issues make me feel guilty. Now, as I watch Shane become so joyful over his picture on the refrigerator, I wonder if I am missing out on not feeling proud of myself.

20



Brackenridge Hospital  
601 East 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas

-Recalling February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1983-

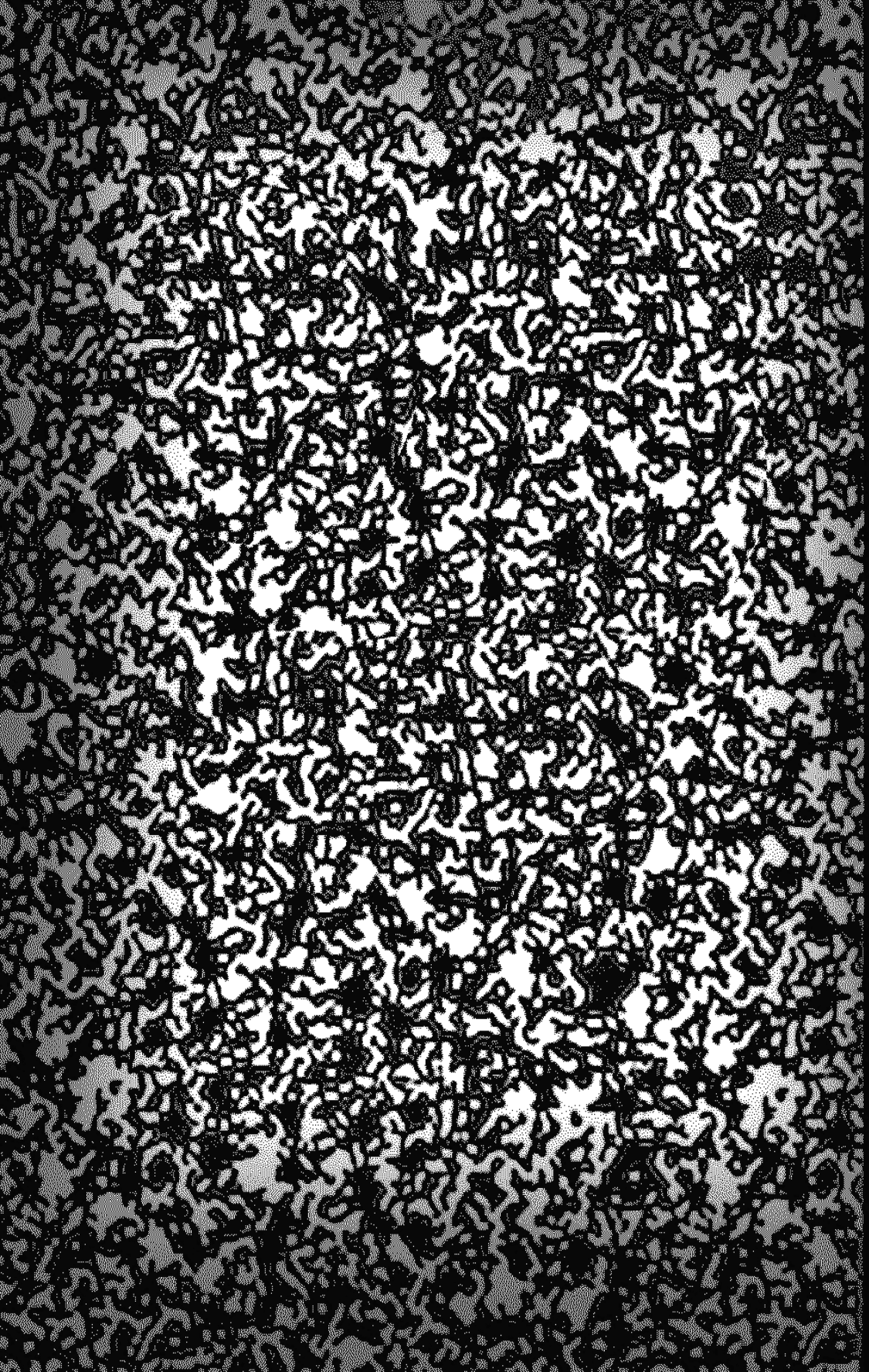
I'm nervously sitting again in the waiting room of Brackenridge Hospital. Finally, Shane and I are called into Mother's room.

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Timidly, we stand as close to her as possible, separated from her by the cold metal vertical bars of a railing around the narrow hospital bed. Her face is ghostly pale as she reaches her frail, shaking hand through the bars. Her hand is tightly taped to secure the intravenous tubing which is connected to hanging bags of medicine. She whispers that she loves us so much. She's sorry, but she is very sick. Then Shane starts crying, and we have to leave her room. Mother is too weak to talk.

Two hours later, Shane and I are still sitting in that awful, dreadful waiting room when Daddy comes from her room hanging his head. I panic as I recognize Daddy's distressed look. He tells us that Mother has passed away. Shane doesn't understand. I'm just 12! What am I supposed to do without Mother?

Who'll take care of Shane???



# 21



First Texas Honda  
1301 West Koenig Lane  
Austin, TX

~August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1988~

Gas prices had nearly tripled in price over the last eighteen years, going from just 36 cents in 1970 to 91 cents in 1988, and Harold knew he needed a new vehicle. He planned to give his Chevy Impala station wagon to Stella, who'd be leaving for college in a few weeks. He and thirteen year old Shane would be living alone, just the two of them, and would need a new means of transportation. Harold thought back to the old red Schwinn Deluxe Tornado bicycle that was his first form of transportation to and from work at the 'Dillo when Harold and Mony first moved to Austin. He had been so proud when they were able to buy their station wagon, and he recalled that Stella's favorite place to ride was in the third-row seat facing backwards. Now, with just Shane and himself to consider, he decided an economic low fuel consumption model was preferable.

Harold and Shane ended up in the office of Mr. Bryan Hardeman, the owner of First Texas Honda in Austin, discussing the matter of a 1988 four-wheel drive Honda Civic Wagon. Bryan—who cheerfully suggested that

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Harold just call him by his first name—explained how his company was the first Honda dealership in the entire state of Texas, having opened just two years earlier. He pointed to a framed letter on the wall from Governor Mark White congratulating him on the grand opening of his dealership. Shane stood near the wall with the photos, mesmerized by a framed photo that showed Bryan standing next to his beautiful black Labrador Retriever, who just so happened to be named “Honda.”

Harold had grown used to the handy storage of a station wagon and found the Civic model quite appealing. Bryan was very sincere and quite happy to discuss the economic value of his Honda vehicles. Going through the options, Harold eventually decided upon a red one with gray interior. Before Harold’s purchase was finalized, Bryan threw in a dealer-installed CD player at no cost. The vehicle would be ready in a week, so Harold could pick it up before Stella left for college. While Harold reviewed and signed the sale contract, Shane patiently looked through a Honda sales brochure, hoping for more pictures of Honda the handsome dog.

Harold was quite pleased with the CD player. As far as he knew, the only vehicle offering a standard manufacturer’s specification, dashboard CD player in 1988 was the Lincoln Town Car. CD players were not standard equipment until the 1990s. Although Harold had only a small collection of music CDs, the new technology was becoming popular and had actually overtaken vinyl album sales in 1988.

On the way home from vehicle shopping, Harold decided it would be fun to stop off at Waterloo Records, a local shop on Lamar, and buy a couple of CDs to play in his new Honda. Waterloo Records opened in 1982 and had been ranked as the “Best Record Store” in Austin by the *Austin Chronicle* nearly every year since their opening. The store was a remarkable place to shop for music because customers could listen through headphones to any CD before they purchased it.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Shane became a little apprehensive at the thought of going inside the music store. He was aware that people always stared at him when they were out in public. He coped by walking very slowly so that his limp would not be as noticeable. He made sure he pushed his left hand deep in his pocket, not wanting people to stare at his disfigured hand. His missing fingers would always be something for people to stare at or even bully him about.

Shane was also painfully aware of his mental disabilities. He had trouble knowing what words to choose to express himself. He found it impossible to interact with strangers. He was continually frustrated and often on the verge of anger simply from not knowing how to cope with his life. Shane really wanted to go home rather than shop for CDs with Harold.

Harold tried to accommodate Shane by being very protective of him in public. Shane often stood behind him even though he was a teenager. Harold did not always know the best way to deal with these issues but was always gentle and patient with Shane. If Shane got very agitated it would often quickly escalate until he had a temper tantrum or crying spell. Harold kept a keen eye on Shane and found a way to retreat to calmer situations when necessary. Once inside, Harold carefully showed Shane how he could listen to music on headphones located on all CD aisles. Slowly, Shane relaxed, smiling as he listened to various lively CDs that Harold suggested to him.

After they spent a while listening to different albums, Harold realized that Shane kept returning to one particular section of the store. Sure enough, Shane had found a CD that made him smile and laugh every time he put on the earphones and listened. Harold asked if he might listen to Shane's favorite, and sure enough, in just seconds, Harold was smiling and snapping his fingers. Shane insisted emphatically that this was the CD he wanted to buy for their new CD collection, so Harold handed Shane a ten dollar bill and watched as Shane cautiously approached the sales counter to make his own purchase, which was a first. Harold realized that the CD must be very

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important to Shane, because it instilled a new sense of courage within him. In Shane's good right hand was the CD single, "Don't Worry, Be Happy" by Bobby McFerrin. He held the ten dollar bill tightly between his thumb and index finger of his left hand, and bravely handed it to the cashier behind the sales counter.

Harold realized that his son actually possessed a level of thoughtfulness that he had overlooked before. Shane would be fourteen on his next birthday. Having overcome lots of disabilities, Shane still had some yet to resolve. He had just revealed to his father that he was capable of choosing happiness over anger. Harold made a note to remember this revelation and vowed to play the CD every time they traveled in their new Honda Civic together. The song, a celebration that expressed a more carefree attitude about life, promised to keep a smile on their faces. With pride, Harold put his arm around his son as they left the store. Shane, with a huge grin on his face, tightly clutched his new CD.

That night, as Harold gazed at the nighttime sky, he was certain that the stars were shining brighter than he had noticed in years, reflecting the great day he and Shane had together. He predicted Shane's favorite part of their new car would be the CD player. Harold would make sure that he and Shane would spend plenty of time together discovering songs that encouraged happiness.

Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



22



Residence of Harold Walker  
Reese Drive,  
Sunset Valley, Texas

-Recalling August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1988-

My birthday is another complete disaster. Just when I think Shane's life is going as well as possible, tragedy strikes again. He has to be rushed to the emergency room because of a seizure that seems to go on forever, although Daddy times it on his watch and says it lasted just four minutes.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Shane had been restless and angry all morning. Around noon, he collapses at Whole Foods when we stop by to pick up a birthday cake at their deli. Daddy shouts for the deli attendant to call for an ambulance while he leans next to Shane, supporting him securely as he shakes and kicks uncontrollably on the floor. The cake falls to the floor—smashed, broken, and forgotten—along with any thought of my birthday celebration—which is best considering the horrible situation.

Shane isn't released from Brackenridge ER until early the next morning; we are assured by doctors that he hasn't suffered any permanent damage. Their diagnosis is that since Shane has gained significant weight this past year, his prescribed medication is no longer effective. New calculations provide what they consider to now be the correct dosage of his anti-seizure meds. They suggest that for the next couple of years, Daddy should make sure to bring Shane in to see his neurologist every six months in order to review the accuracy of his meds based on his weight and size.

By ten a.m., we're finally home again after stopping to get Shane's new prescription filled at the hospital pharmacy. Daddy seems sad and defeated. Shane seems too quiet and sleepy. I'm just too guilt ridden—I retreat to my bedroom, wishing it were time for my imminent departure. As always, unrelenting guilt seems to occupy my whole soul. I desperately want to escape, so I can plan for my own life. What about Shane's future? What about mine?

I'm exhausted and fighting a severe headache, but I get busy packing my graduation luggage to load into the back of our family station wagon, the tan and blue Chevrolet Impala, Daddy's pride and joy ever since he bought it back when I was just two years old. It's still as clean and shiny as ever—Daddy conscientiously keeps it washed and waxed. Last week, he had all new tires installed because I'm taking it to college.

Texas Woman's University (TWU) is located in Denton, Texas, which is over 200 miles away from Sunset Valley. Although I could have chosen the University of Texas in Austin, I made a deliberate point of choosing a college

## Hear My Soul Sing

several hours away from Sunset Valley. I'm boldly striving to achieve independence and my own identity.

The breeze, flowing through the open window of my bedroom, finally chases all my frustrations away. Shane continues to deeply sleep in his bedroom down the hall. My sweet Daddy offers to help me pack. I know that I'll miss my Daddy more than I can possibly imagine. I've already shed lots of tears thinking about leaving him. He's not the person I'm trying to distance myself from. That's Shane. My brother, when near, seems to constantly drain all my life away from me. He requires so much help and constant attention every day just to keep his life in order.

Daddy disappears a moment to check on Shane, and when he returns, he's carrying a brand new, brown leather guitar case. I don't recall ever seeing this beautiful guitar case and am quite curious about when Daddy got it and what's inside.

Sitting down next to me on my cluttered bed, Daddy starts telling me about how he originally purchased his guitar without a case. Back then, he just carried it across

his back with a guitar strap because he was also carrying his bulky sea bag. He had just gotten out of the Navy and was hitchhiking to the Woodstock Music Festival.

It seems that Daddy and Mother met and fell in love at the festival. Later, when they worked together with the Hog Farm commune at the Texas International Music Festival, they decided to get married. Daddy always kept his guitar along with a few other dear keepsakes together. Actually, Daddy stopped playing his acoustic guitar when Shane was born with such extensive birth defects. Daddy explains that later on, he decided to get a nice case to keep his guitar protected for the day he would give it to me.

Daddy slides his hand across the smooth leather guitar case then slowly lifts the lid. The case is lined with soft, plush, burgundy velvet. Inside lies the acoustic guitar that I remember so well from back when Daddy used to play for Mother and me. The guitar appears well polished and tuned. Obviously, Daddy takes very good care of it, although I haven't heard him sing or play his guitar for nearly fourteen years.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Daddy then pauses to ask me if I know where my name comes from. Gazing at Daddy's guitar with the psychedelic-orange, daisy guitar strap attached brings back a flood of musical memories that I still hold dear to my heart. Daddy points to the actual brand on the headstock of his prized guitar. I gasp as I realize that there in beautiful cursive gold lettering is my name, Stella Harmony.

Daddy goes on to describe how he and Mother shared so much joy over the music that they both loved. He points and asks if I've ever noticed the embedded star over the Stella logo. Shrugging my shoulders, I listen with amazement as Daddy explains that Stella is Latin for "star" and reveals that I am the star of his life, and he hopes that my life will be filled with music. My name, Stella Harmony, is my destiny.

Daddy has given me his precious guitar and wants me to take it with me to college. When I'm lonesome for home, he suggests that I play some of the songs he used to play Mother and me. Daddy seems sure that I will pick up guitar playing as easily as I have learned to play piano. As

I touch the worn, woven guitar strap, I try to imagine it draped across the strong shoulders of Daddy, a young, handsome ex-sailor, while he played guitar for Mother back when they were just falling deeply in love long ago.

Under Daddy's guitar lies a pressed and folded bohemian-style ankle-length skirt, the fabric embroidered with a row of elephants with uplifted trunks and a row of vivid, dazzling pink- and orange-beaded daisies. Daddy remarks that it's probably just about my size now. I realize that this must have belonged to Mother. She must have loved daisies all her life. Looking out my bedroom window, I can see pink daisies planted at the base of our mailbox at the end of the driveway. Looking down at the guitar case again, I see the psychedelic orange daisies on the guitar strap blend together with the vivid pink-beaded daisies on Mother's skirt.

Under Mother's folded skirt, lay its coordinating peasant blouse along with a few little-girl toddler outfits that must have belonged to me—fancy little girl panties covered with bright pink daisies and a red ruffled swimming

## Hear My Soul Sing

suit I remember wearing to Barton Springs Pool. At the very bottom of the case, lies a brown-paper, rolled-up kite on which I had colored beautiful birds that Mother drew for me. Pointing to the dove, Daddy remarks that after Woodstock, Mother always loved doves.

I wrap my arms tightly around Daddy's neck and squeeze with all my might. Maybe I am making a mistake leaving Daddy and going off to college. Daddy is my prince. Even though we both have tears in our eyes, Daddy tells me not to worry about leaving home. He promises he will always be here when I want to come home.

Eventually, all my things are packed. Daddy and I carry everything out to the station wagon, both of us hoping it all will fit. I hesitate when Daddy decides the only way to load all my stuff efficiently will be to fold down the third-row passenger seat that has always been my favorite part of our station wagon, but, of course, I won't be using it now that I'm driving. I'm a little sad but decide it is indeed the best plan for successfully loading all my luggage.

Thinking back, I realize that we have never, ever folded

down that third-row seat. Realizing just how sentimental my Daddy is, I come to the conclusion that he must have always left that retractable seat up in place because it was my favorite place to ride. That seat was my secret place, among lots of other secret places, where I could keep a little distance from my brother Shane. I realize in a flash of emotion that Daddy knows how I feel about Shane and actually understands. Whenever and wherever we ever had gone, Shane ruled the second-row bench seat—usually by an unhappy, angry commotion—as I sat quietly reserved, isolated, and protected in my third-row seat gazing out through the back window.

As Daddy pulls the seat upward to release it from its locked position before lying it down flat, I notice something that had been hidden, lost in the shadows beneath my favorite seat. I quickly ask Daddy to wait a minute while I retrieve whatever is there. My prying fingers carefully reach beneath the seat and touch what seems to be a string of beads. Pulling them out from their hidden, dark space beneath the seat, I recognize instantly, from so many years

## Hear My Soul Sing

ago, Mother's good-luck Happy Buddha beads. Daddy stands astonished, pondering the long lost treasure that we've just discovered by some manner of immense good luck.

Bewildered and confused, I wonder how Mother's beads could have gotten lost under my seat. I start to remember how happy those beads always made Mother. I remember her allowing me to play with them, even as she reminded me to be extra careful. Then I remember how sad Mother had been when she realized her beads were lost. That had been when we were both sick in bed with chickenpox.

Daddy is also silent, pondering the bewildering reappearance of the beads. At last, backtracking over long-ago events in his memories, he recalls that the last time Mother actually had her beads was on our trip to Willie Nelson's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Concert in College Station. The beads must have fallen off my Baby Billy doll when we drove to College Station. The Happy Buddha beads had been patiently waiting, lost in the belly of the station wagon ever since.

I hold the Happy Buddha beads close and kiss the

Buddha's belly as I'd seen Mother do in the past. Then I lift the beads over Daddy's head and place them lovingly around his neck. This is where Happy Buddha belongs now. More than anything, I want Daddy's life to be filled with good luck, especially since I am going away to college.

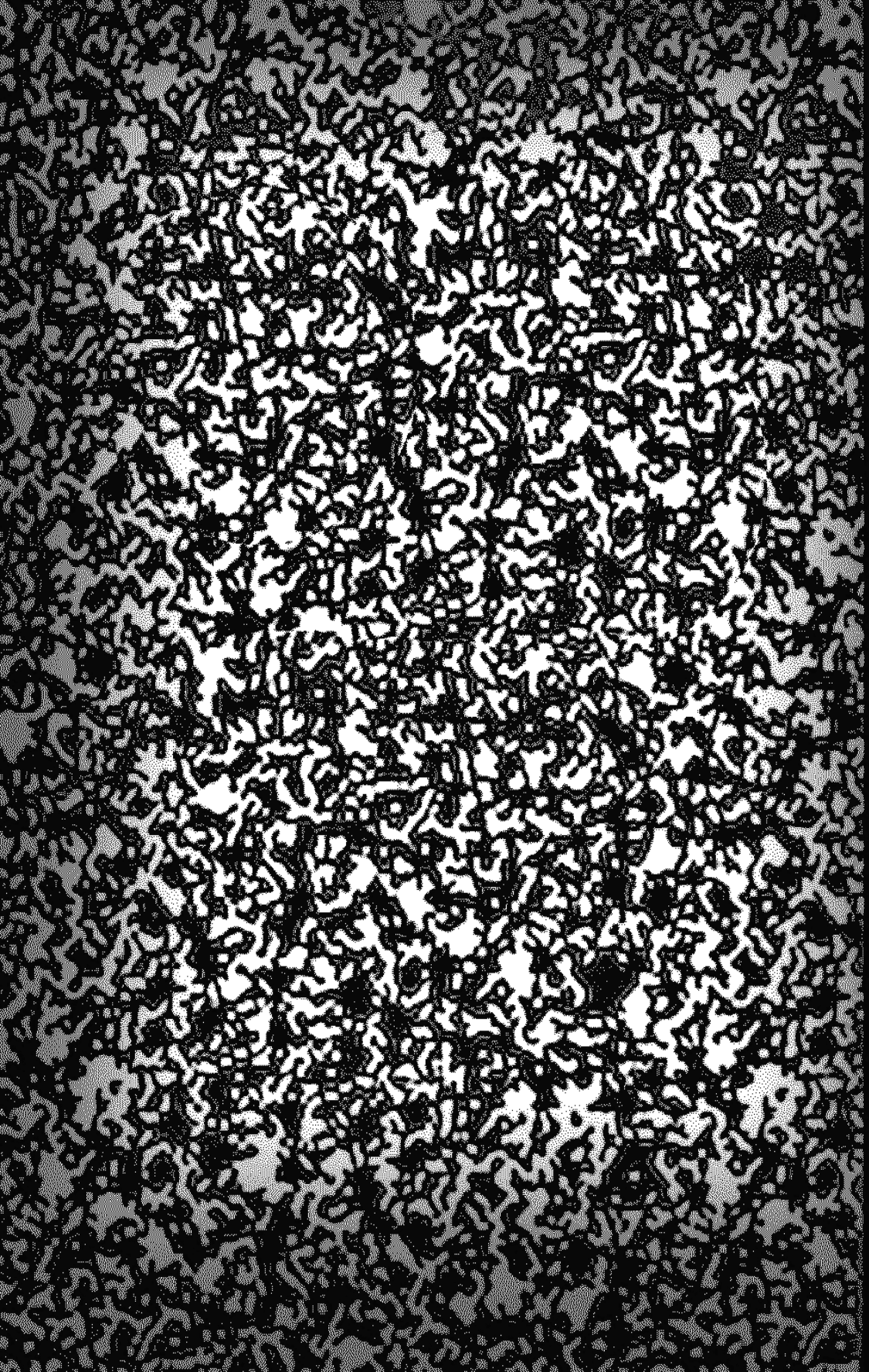
It's time to get my luggage loaded aboard the station wagon. We're soon finished with the task, making sure that Daddy's treasured guitar case is safely stacked among all my luggage and boxes. The last box that Daddy brings from the house has Justin Boots and Tomlinson Feed Store stamped on the side. I realize it contains Mother's beautiful, daisy-embroidered cowgirl boots that she never actually got to wear. Daddy says that they now belong to me.

Daddy goes to check on Shane again and finds him just waking up from his exhausted, medicated sleep. Shane is still moving very quietly and slowly as he finally gets out of bed. Arm in arm, the two of them slowly shuffle down the hallway and out the front door to tell me goodbye. I accept the short three-way hug as best we can manage it, then

## Hear My Soul Sing

quickly escape to the driver's seat. When I turn the key, the station wagon starts up as reliably as ever. I feel warm tears flowing down my cheeks as I drive down the driveway with my arm out the window waving back at Daddy. As the driveway dust pours in my window, I feel both exhilarated and devastated at the same time. Somehow, I'm reminded of how my Billy Bunny escaped to the woods one night long ago.

In my rearview mirror, I see Daddy waving slowly as I'm driving away. The last thing I see before I turn out onto Reese Drive is Daddy reaching up to touch Happy Buddha's belly.





Residence of Harold Walker  
 Reese Drive,  
 Sunset Valley, Texas

~August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1988~

Miserable over her departure, Harold paused for a moment while holding the front door partially open and looked back over his shoulder at the sight of Stella driving away. He realized then that staring at the horizon would not bring her back. She was gone, and the dust had already settled, so Harold stepped inside his house into the coolness that seemed to refresh him only slightly. Harold sadly, thoughtfully walked through the living room and into the dining area; Shane sat at the red and chrome dinette table where Harold and Mony had spent many hours discussing the future of their family.

Now it was just Shane and himself. He felt too worn out for his forty-four years. He saw ahead an unavoidable, necessary transition for Shane and himself. It was now just the two of them.

Shane, evidently quite hungry after his long sleep, had prepared his own favorite snack, a peanut butter sandwich. It was something he had been tutored on by Mony and now could proudly prepare himself. It was not unusual for Shane to have a snack at any odd time of the day. Slowly strolling

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over to the kitchen refrigerator, Harold poured a glass of cold milk that he placed next to Shane's peanut butter sandwich as he passed by on his way to the sunroom. Harold glanced over at their smiling family portrait on the wall. He had no desire to eat just now.

He sat on the piano bench. Just minutes earlier, he and Stella had sat in her bedroom and reminisced. Now he sat with his head lowered in sadness and touched the Happy Buddha beads she had placed around his neck. He had a feeling that he wouldn't ever remove them. Just touching them reminded him of when he had lovingly placed these beads, in lieu of a wedding ring, around the delicate neck of his beloved Mony. She had been the light of his life. Stella, now nearly grown, was the exact stunning image of Mony.

Harold and Mony's life together had started off as a fantasy, a music-inspired adventure. Hand in hand, their love had been inspired by the sound of his fingers strumming the strings of his acoustic guitar that he had now handed down to his Stella as she ventured off to a new college life.

Stella was a magical part of the first four years of his marriage with Mony. Stella's cherub smile accompanied every adventure Harold and Mony experienced while exploring their new life together in Austin. His favorite expressions of love were to bring home surprises, and to reveal secret plans for new adventures for Stella and Mony.

Harold heard the creaking dinette chair legs drag abruptly away from the table and a plastic glass plunk down on the kitchen counter. The faucet handle creaked just as water started gushing into the sink. Harold could tell that Shane was rinsing his glass and then wetting a dishcloth to wipe off the dinette table. Thankfully, Shane had become a compulsively tidy person. Without any doubt, Harold knew the red and chrome dinette table was wiped clean of any sandwich crumbs from Shane's lunch. Harold remained quiet, deep in thought, recalling details of how Mony had sacrificed everything to take care of him and their children.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Shane's sad birth had been the single event that reinvented their world, changing forever the course of Mony's life, and certainly that of his and Stella's. Harold had worked two jobs ever since, partially to avoid the issues, but also because if he dedicated himself to financial concerns, then Mony could dedicate herself to their children's development. Mony had sacrificed all her personal needs in order to cultivate the best possible world for their children, which was an undeniably impossible task.

Just as Shane suffered the clearly visible scars of his birth defects, Harold knew Stella suffered many invisible, internal scars to her personality. But without Mony, their world would have been many times more devastating. Mony spent every waking minute trying to mold their existence into the best possible situation, often doing her regular, routine household chores long into the night as her children slept.

Shane's ability to walk independently with only a minimal limp depended on Mony doing long hours of physical therapy with him. She learned exercise techniques that included holding Shane's legs in correct position and then encouraging and coercing Shane to move, then crawl, then walk, then actually be able to shuffle-run. His unbalanced limp would remain forever because one leg was slightly shorter than the other. Because of Mony's focused attention on Shane's disfigured left hand (having only a thumb and one weak finger), he was eventually able to hold things with that hand and even button his own shirt.

Mony pursued every medical suggestion that could be tried to improve Shane's future. She was fastidious with his seizure medication so that Shane seldom suffered more than one or two seizures a year. Mony also focused on Shane's obvious mental "retardation" a term she hated that his doctors used to diagnose Shane's disability. She also hated similar terms she heard in public places and found even more derogatory like idiot, moron and imbecile.

Mony offered her sullen, often angry Shane countless opportunities to

## Judy K Johnson

challenge his thinking and language skills. Since Shane couldn't function intellectually anywhere near normal, it wasn't long before the school also put Shane in the category of "mentally retarded." The school records used exact terminology that defined children with disabilities with labels based on results of a comprehensive individual assessment. The results made by an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee placed Shane immediately in special education. The exact terminology used in Shane's records included mentally retarded, multiple handicaps including multisensory behavior disorder, orthopedically handicapped with a clubfoot, absence of fingers and significant muscle impairments, motor deficiencies, developmental lags in cognitive ability, communication deficiencies, and possible autism. It was officially determined that he could not be adequately educated in the regular classes of public schools without the provision of special services. It was noted that Shane should be monitored for possibly becoming a target for bullying from other classmates due to his multiple "differences."

Minimizing Shane's disfigurements and physical impairments had been Mony's primary objective so that Shane might be accepted by the public and not be shunned or bullied as much when he approached school age. Mony was also anxious for Stella, who was always frightened by the public's reactions to Shane. Mony had often expressed to Harold how much Stella's love for music had been a blessing that made her proud of how much their daughter was like him. Music seemed to be a balm to soothe Stella's sadness. Her peppy, jazzy, leg-swinging style was a magical tonic that helped soothe Stella's problems with her brother.

As Harold sat there now in his nearly empty house and caressed Mony's Happy Buddha beads around his neck, he wiped tears from his cheeks. He cried in silence, not wanting Shane in the next room to hear his misery. Mony had worked herself to exhaustion day after day. He knew she did not allow

## Hear My Soul Sing

herself many comforts and did not take care of her own needs even when she fell ill. The dark circles under her eyes became a permanent part of her facial features. She had trouble sleeping, just as he did, almost every night after Shane was born. Her own immunity suffered silently until it was obvious that something was terribly wrong.

Harold recalled when she finally shared with him that she was diagnosed with stage three breast cancer. Mony worked valiantly to rid herself of the aggressive disease. She yearned to be healthy again so that she could continue to raise her children who had so many challenges yet ahead of them. For months and months, she endured any treatment that might possibly save her—surgery, chemo, radiation. She never mentioned any discomfort or pain during her struggles. She always had a smile for Stella and Shane. Harold wished constantly that he could take her cancer himself if only she could be cured.

Of course, nothing could be done. Weak and frail, Mony eventually spent her last few painful days in Brackenridge hospital. Their doomed fate once again suffered heart-breaking devastation there. Mony, silently sensing Harold's fears, constantly urged him to leave his frustrations behind for the good of their children. Finally, Mony requested Stella and Shane to come into her hospital room. Weakly reaching toward for her children, Mony began talking with gentle, loving expressions about how much she loved them. With her last bit of courage, she smiled and told them not to be too sad, to help Daddy and each other, and most important, to always remember the happy times they had together. Then, after touching their cheeks one last time, she asked them to go out to the waiting room for just a little while so she might rest.

It was just a few hours later that Harold sat and held Mony's hand as she smiled weakly up at him. He told her that he couldn't live without her and she told him that he must. She reminded him of the song, "I Got You Babe" that

Judy K Johnson

he sang to her on their wedding night. She reminded him that whenever he witnessed a beautiful Texas sunset, he should think of the spectacular sunset that had served as the backdrop of their wedding ceremony. She promised she would always be with him in his heart forever.

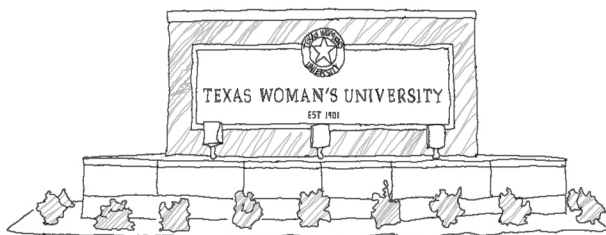
Mony smiled weakly with just one last whispered request on her lips—please take the very best care of their children. Without hesitation, Harold promised and leaned forward to kiss her lips softly, but at that very moment, he knew she was gone. He remained hugging Mony for as long as he could, never wanting to leave her.

The on-duty nurse eventually came in and reminded him of what now needed to be done and that his children were waiting anxiously for him in the waiting room. He stood up with his shoulders drooping low, searching for strength enough to place one foot in front of the other as he forlornly left Mony's hospital room. Apprehensively, he approached the waiting room; he saw Shane impatiently, noisily paging through a *National Geographic*. He saw Stella patiently, noiselessly waiting and watching for him with fear and bewilderment etched on her face. He didn't know how to tell them that Mony was forever gone.

How they ever made it through that time was bewildering to Harold. All of Mony's extraordinary efforts with Shane had to be rearranged and divided between him and Stella. Harold took charge of all medical and therapy issues. Stella, because there were no other available options, was appointed to oversee her brother at home after school until Harold could get home from his job. Stella really had really no personal life except when Harold got home from work; then, she retreated to the sunroom to play her piano, often for long hours into the night. If he encouraged her to spend time with friends, Stella always declined. Harold quit his second job at the 'Dillo, now only working days for the Austin Park and Wildlife Department as supervisor of a work crew.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Several well-meaning individuals had even candidly remarked to Harold that Shane should live at the Austin State School, a mental retardation facility in Austin. At that facility, 550 residents with more severe mental retardation that required intensive supervision lived full time. This school consistently complied with the standards of ACDD (Accreditation Council on Developmental Disability) originally part of the Joint Council for Accreditation of Hospitals. It was a reputable facility, a safe place, but Harold was actually sickened by the thought that Shane would not live at home. He knew Mony would have never, ever considered that arrangement. Harold felt Shane didn't deserve to be institutionalized. He deserved to be a real part of their community.



Texas Woman's University  
304 Administration Drive  
Denton, Texas

~November 23, 1989~

During the Thanksgiving holidays, Stella and her new room mate, Dana Stevens, were among a very few of the 9,850 total students enrolled in the fall semester who remained on campus.

"I just can't take time off to travel back home to Iowa for Thanksgiving," Dana explained to Stella as they watched students leaving their dorm loaded down with luggage. "It's such a long drive and I'm pretty overwhelmed with all my courses. I'm really trying to improve my grades."

"I understand completely," responded Stella casually. "I'm not planning on going home either. It only takes me about four hours to drive home, but I really need to concentrate on my studies, too." Stella had outstanding grades but found coursework an perfect excuse to avoid a trip back home which would probably rekindle all the guilt she felt over Shane's life. She had never shared any information about her family life to anyone on campus.

"We don't have to spend every minute in our dorm room studying. Since the campus will be nearly abandoned, let's take a little break tomorrow and

## Hear My Soul Sing

tour some parts of campus we don't normally get to see. I'm a sophomore, and I still haven't taken time to see the Little Chapel-in-the-Woods. I've heard the stained glass windows are stunning," recommended Dana.

"Sounds ideal," commented Stella. She didn't really relish the thought of staying in their dorm the whole Thanksgiving break. "I've heard that it's one of the highlights of the whole 270 acre campus. It was built over fifty years ago and was even dedicated by Eleanor Roosevelt."

The next day, after they achieved their individual study goals, Stella and Dana took some time to stroll around campus. They paused at the Little Chapel-in-the-Woods and read campus literature that described the small chapel that could seat 110 people.

Designed by architect O'Neil Ford, the Little Chapel-in-the-Woods was designated one of Texas' 20 most outstanding architectural achievements by the Texas Society of Architects. The building's stained glass windows, lighting, woodwork, and flooring were designed and created by TWU students. The theme of the stained glass scenes depict women ministering to others in different fields such as nursing, teaching, speech, literature, dance, and music.

Stella paused a long time in front of the last stained glass that showed various music endeavors of women. Rays from the typical, vivid Texas sunset outside hit the stained glass at just the right angle to reflect a luminescent glow around the deep purple and blue tones that beautifully highlighted the image before her.

"I've always loved listening to peppy, happy music because it always helped me to feel happy myself. It's the reason I loved to take piano lessons when I was younger," revealed Stella somewhat shyly. "I know how music can be so soothing to me, but I've never stopped to consider how my music might affect anyone else. My music might actually be soothing to someone else and provide the same relief that it does for me!"

## Judy K Johnson

“Let me assure you, whenever I hear you play piano or guitar, your music definitely makes me feel peaceful, content and relaxed,” complemented Dana truthfully.

That was actually the first moment when Stella considered music as a gift to be used to minister to others. She had always been compelled to play music just to soothe her own emotional issues. She knew that her music untangled the messes in her life, made her feel protected, and unlocked the door to her own spirituality. Now she also realized that her gift of music to others could offer healing to them as well as a blessing to herself. This realization seemed to activate within Stella a powerful passion to aim her music career directly at providing service to others. “I think I'm going to look into the music therapy program here at TWU,” commented Stella as she gazed one more time up at the inspiring stained glass window before her.

Dana nodded in agreement. Both Stella and Dana had been undecided about their exact choice of majors. They sat in the empty chapel and talked once again about their futures. What gave Stella and her room-mate comfort was the well-known fact that TWU had a proven track record of educating a diverse community of students who went on to lead fulfilling lives both personally and professionally.

The impressive list of graduates from TWU who had had stunning careers included several famous people. Helen Gurley Brown (writer of *Sex and the Single Girl*, an international best seller published in 1962 and Editor-in-Chief of *Cosmopolitan* since 1965) attended TWU in 1939-41. Ann Williams (creator in 1976 of the Dallas Black Dance Theatre, a modern dance company of young black dancers) graduated with a master's degree in Dance in 1965. Louise Ritter (Olympic gold medal athlete at the 1988 summer games in Seoul, South Korea, who set a record in the high jump of 6' 8") graduated from TWU in 1982.

Stella and Dana also hadn't chosen TWU because it was an exclusive

## Hear My Soul Sing

woman's college; it was well known that since 1972 men had been accepted into the health sciences graduate school, although their percentage represented much less than ten percent of the population. Stella secretly didn't mind that the social struggle of meeting guys and dating them wasn't much of a concern here. She preferred to concentrate exclusively on maintaining her outstanding performance in academics and music. This effectively proved her self-worth and calmed her inner demons.

As they talked about their ambitions, they strolled around the campus and passed by the Margo Jones Performance Hall, the primary performance facility for the Department of Music, which was currently closed for renovations. It was ten times larger than the beautiful chapel they had just explored. Stella and Dana wondered aloud if the Performance Hall would have its renovation construction completed in time for them to perform in recital there before they graduated. The hall had been built in the 1920s and was known as the premier theater in North Texas. The Performance Hall had actually been closed since 1987 for a \$3.5 million renovation.

"I dearly hope that we get to perform in a concert on stage here," sighed Dana wistfully as they looked at the blueprints posted in front of the Performance Hall.

"It's a dream of mine, too. Hey, maybe we can even play a piano duet! The renovation is supposed to include upgrading some concert grand pianos," speculated Stella. They shared their dreams together about what a fabulous experience performing on stage there would be.

It was not just a happy coincidence that roommates Stella and Dana were both primarily interested in attaining degrees from the Department of Music. Dr. Nancy Hadsell, a professor of music who had only been teaching at TWU since 1984, was extremely well liked by her students, among who were Stella and Dana. She taught them both in Keyboard Musicianship and also in Guitar class. Both girls were immensely gifted pianists in multiple styles, able to

## Judy K Johnson

perform the most intricate sheet music with beautiful technique and exquisite expression. Stella, completely devoted to her guitar lessons, was just beginning to learn that instrument. Dana, on the other hand, was as accomplished on guitar as on piano. After working well together on a piano duet for keyboard musicianship class, both students were interviewed by Dr. Hadsell about their ambitions and also about their personal backgrounds and music history. She then suggested that it might be advantageous for both girls to become roommates.

Over the last couple of months, that pairing had been a great success, even though they hadn't yet learned much about each other personally. The studious pair supported each other's studies, and Stella was very pleased about the extra instruction she received from her new roommate in playing guitar. Many nights, the entire 24<sup>th</sup> floor of the John A. Guinn Hall was enhanced by the delightful music of two acoustic guitars and two beautiful voices in duet flowing from the room at the end of the hall occupied by Stella and Dana.

Stella became very fond of Dana's capacity for immense generosity and support. She was even more appreciative of their growing friendship. She learned that Dana was Catholic, and it pleasantly reminded her of Mony when Dana touched her black opal rosary beads while saying her evening prayers. Stella began to pleasantly realize that Dana was her first real friend. Dana described to Stella how she first got involved with musical performance by singing in a church choir at a very young age. Dana shared how music was able to move her soul and fill her heart with peace. Stella also knew the magic of music, which had the same ability to settle her restless, anxious, guilty heart. Their trusted friendship seemed to have the power to awaken and nurture Stella's self-protected, closed-off heart.

Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



25



Guinn Residence Hall Living Room  
Texas Woman's University Campus  
Denton, Texas

-Recalling November 24, 1989-

After riding the Guinn dormitory elevator leisurely down 24 floors from the top floor to ground level, its doors slowly open to reveal an unexpected reality on the first-floor public living room. My smile immediately vanishes, replaced by disbelief and shock that are noticeable to any casual onlookers. Across the room near the front doors stands Dana, greeting what surely appears to be her

## Hear My Soul Sing

family. She and I have plans to meet up at the Commons, which connect Guinn and Stark Residence Halls on the TWU campus, and provide space for recreational activities and study. From there we intend to go to the C-Store that sells convenient food, health, and beauty items. We're going to load up on snacks for our casual Thanksgiving meal and then spend time studying Music and World Cultures, a class that we are both enrolled in this semester.

Dana, giggling with exuberant joy, stands with her parents, and they embrace in a spontaneous group hug. This encounter is obviously a surprise visit, and Dana appears happier than I've ever seen her. It isn't, however, the family reunion that I'm witnessing that has erased my smile and caused my dumbfounded stare. No, what pauses me and instantly stiffens my posture is the sight of a young girl, obviously Dana's sibling, in a wheelchair just behind Dana and her parents. Dana releases herself from her parents' embrace and, dancing with joy, grabs the arms of her sister's wheelchair and spins around with her as if in a whirling waltz. The entire family is laughing and looks

extremely pleased to be together, if even for a short day visit. I glance about, looking for a quick way to disappear—perhaps even, if unnoticed, stepping back into the elevator to retreating back up to the 24<sup>th</sup> floor in the clouds.

However, Dana notices my presence and warmly smiles toward me even as she continues her spinning dance with her sister. Trying not to gawk at sister's obvious handicaps, I manage to compose myself and return a proper, although contrived, smile back to my roommate. I approach Dana's family, obviously more shy than usual in their presence. Dana slows her sister's wheelchair to a stop as she introduces me as her best-ever roommate. Indeed, her parents both instantly, graciously give me a sincere embrace explaining that Dana has told them so many good and kind things about me since we became roommates. Feeling an insistent tapping on my lower back, I turn around to see Dana's sister pressed up close behind me in her wheelchair. She proceeds to urgently tug on my sweater sleeve, telling me how much she loves me, too.

Dana introduces me to her sister, Darla, as she

## Hear My Soul Sing

carefully backs her up a bit and gently peels back her sister's fingers that are tightly grasped on the sleeve of my sweater. She gives her sister a kiss on the cheek and reminds her that she shouldn't pull on other people's sweaters in public. Dana stoops to her knees to be on eye level with Darla and proceeds to tell her how much she misses seeing her every day. Dana and Darla obviously seem to have a magical relationship, and I'm amazed by this public show of affection.

Dana's parents invite me to have dinner with them. They explain that they know Dana is too busy to travel home for a long weekend, so they decided to travel here for a quick visit and take her out for a good meal. They've decided to try a great barbeque place, Prairie House Restaurant, located about nine miles east of campus on US-380W. I hesitate, but not wanting to appear unfriendly, timidly accept—actually feeling a surprising, unfamiliar tiny bit of pleasure.

The restaurant is a log and stone building with a metal roof. Upon approaching the entrance, I can smell their

smokey, barbeque pit, which makes me realize how hungry I truly am. Indoors, intriguing antique artifacts and old signs are displayed on vintage wooden interior walls.

During our dinner date with Dana's family, I carefully study the relationship between Dana and Darla, who, like my brother Shane, stands out as "different." What is most amazing is the fact that Dana doesn't seem to pay a bit of attention to anyone other than her family. Unlike me, she seems totally unaware of strangers at other tables staring or whispering behind her back. She only advises her sister once about not creating overly loud outbursts—outbursts which also happen to be quite joyful.

We all order off the menu from choices such as mesquite-grilled steaks, baby-back ribs, buffalo burgers, and chicken-fried ribeyes. During our meal, Dana and her parents often pause deliberately to wait on comments or requests from Darla. They don't try to finish her sentences or tell her not to speak. They don't show concern when Darla uses her fork to knock over the vase of artificial flowers in the center of the table. They just move the unwanted

## Hear My Soul Sing

centerpiece off to the side. It turns out that Darla did it because she was having trouble seeing me across the table.

When the waiter eventually appears to take our dessert order, he describes the delicious choices: cobbler of the day with ice cream, vanilla ice cream with huckleberry sauce, root beer float, chocolate cake, banana pudding, or a fried cheesecake burrito.

Darla thinks for the longest time before she finally loudly announces, "Ice cream, please—but no huckleberry sauce." When the waiter asks if she would also like some apple cobbler, she nods her head emphatically yes and laughs even louder. At that moment, the whole family laughs right along with Darla. As Dana reaches over with her napkin to remove smudges of barbeque sauce from Darla's face, she tells me that Darla absolutely adores apple cobbler and vanilla ice cream. Surprisingly, I'm actually able to chuckle out loud myself. Instantly, I have a fleeting thought about how much Shane loves his peanut butter sandwiches.

I'm surprised that I feel so comfortable around Dana's

family. Prior to this experience, I didn't know that such a pleasant, obviously rewarding family relationship could exist with a sibling who has such obvious social and physical handicaps. As we leave the restaurant, I can actually say that I'm no longer concerned about what other people might be thinking or saying about Darla. I smile as we walk along together to the parking lot with Darla racing ahead in her wheelchair.

When we get back to Guinn Residence Hall, I say my goodbyes to Dana's family, thanking them for this experience that they have no way of knowing has made such a huge impact on me. Before heading toward the elevator, I go over to Dana's sister, kneel down before her wheelchair at a courteous eye level, and tell her how happy I am to have met her today. I ask her permission to give her a hug. Smiling from ear to ear, she strongly grabs and tugs on my sweater once again. This time I lean forward, and as we mutually hug, I plant a big kiss on her smiling cheeks. I have trouble understanding my instantaneous, new emotional reaction but it feels good.

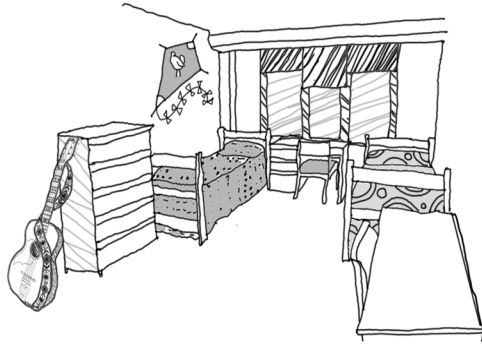
## Hear My Soul Sing

Riding up in the elevator, I ponder this new, amazing wonderment, but as I step out on the 24<sup>th</sup> floor, it instantly evaporates into familiar, dreaded guilt shadowed by sadness when I realize that I've never been able to easily feel such obvious pride of my own family in public, ever!

As I sit alone in my dorm room, I begin missing my far away Daddy so terribly my heart aches for him and tears roll down my cheeks. Wishing I could just feel his hug tonight, I reach for his precious Stella Harmony acoustic guitar and sing a recent song by Bette Midler, "Wind Beneath My Wings." This song is a favorite of mine and one of the first songs I've mastered on my guitar. I know that Daddy always has and always will be my hero, the heart and source of my loving family life.

As I sit softly playing and singing, Dana quietly enters our dorm room and joins in beautiful harmony on the final chorus. My thoughts are on Daddy, my one trusted support. Yes, he truly makes me feel like I can fly higher than an eagle and encourages me to soar toward my own passion of music.

26



Guinn Residence Hall 24th Floor  
Texas Woman's University Campus  
Denton, Texas

-Recalling November 25, 1989-

Facing each other as we remain tucked in our twin dorm beds, Dana and I begin an intimate, rather shy discussion about our siblings that has been innocently avoided since we became roommates. Whether we were protecting ourselves or each other, we've never attempted, until now, any topic about private family matters. I guess meeting her family yesterday has broken the ice.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Dana quietly initiates our conversation. She begins by explaining that she wants me to better understand Darla—about how much she loves and misses her sixteen-year-old sister. Mesmerized again by the soft melodic affection in her voice and the glowing expression on her face, I clearly understand that Dana adores Darla. It's extremely important to her that I understand. Swaddled tightly in my pink daisy, striped comforter, I listen in complete silence from my bed carefully holding back my emotions.

Darla was born having a very low birth weight and failure to thrive; she suffered from a condition known as Williams Syndrome, a rare birth defect in which just 20 out of 35,000 genes in the brain are missing—enough to cause severe disability. It's quite common that people with Williams Syndrome develop astounding musical talent even though they have profound mental disabilities. Dana describes how Darla can remember hundreds of song lyrics that she sings in perfect pitch but still can't add six plus two. If Darla wanders away from her family, even while in her wheelchair, she's completely lost in minutes and unable

to find her way back again. Doctors described Darla as having significant mental retardation, a term I shudder at—I'm well used to hearing it in regard to my brother Shane.

Dana continues in a soft voice. Kids with Williams Syndrome often have unusual elf-like facial features such as a wide mouth, a small upturned nose with a broad tip and low nasal bridge, a long philtrum (which is the indented area below your nose), widely spaced teeth, full lips, low-set ears, a pointed chin, and puffiness around the eyes. They often have an inward bend of their pinkie finger (I recall Darla's unusual way of holding her fork), short stature, tooth problems like defective tooth enamel, low muscle tone, gross motor skills, hyperactive reactions to high frequency sound or when fearful, and frequent troubling ear infections and constipation. They are below average in height and weight. Their I.Q. is usually in the 60s, but they have outgoing, very talkative social skills. When around strangers, they don't have any sense of their own handicap. In fact, strangers are often overwhelmed by their outgoing friendliness, constant smiling, and nonstop conversation.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Her description reminds me of my initial meeting with Darla. She goes on to proudly describe in detail two short symphonies that Darla composed entirely by memory before she was thirteen years old. Dana mentions that I'd recognize them because she often plays them during piano practice when she misses her sister.

Sadly, she goes on to describe Darla's other medical conditions, which Dana fears may affect her sister in the future: inguinal hernia, cardiac problems, narrowing of major blood vessels, blood pressure problems, abdominal pain, diverticulitis, hyperthyroidism, and even diabetes. She concludes by saying that this syndrome affects just 1 in 20,000 births.

I remain silent and immobile, still burrowed deep within my comforter. I had no idea that Dana and I have so much more in common than just our shared interests. We've each grown up with a sibling with severe disabilities. Realizing that Dana might interpret my prolonged silence as withdrawal or disapproval, I soon find myself stammering, then weeping. I sob that we actually have similar families. I

blurt out that my brother was born with lots of severe medical problems. I grew up worrying and feeling so guilty that I might have done something to cause his birth defects. Before Shane was born, Mother told me that I would get a perfect baby brother or sister. Something went really wrong when my brother, Shane, was born.

Just as Dana has shared with me, I proceed to give her a detailed description of my brother's appearance and his medical and intellectual disabilities. She nods in understanding as I go on to reveal for the first time ever what it's been like for me. I cry as I reveal to her many of my discoveries that I'd kept hidden until now. For example, I never realized that Shane and I have the same deep hazel-green colored eyes until he got his false eye. I always just stared uncontrollably at his badly scared left eye, never at his good right eye. His false eye was painted to match his good eye, and only then did I discover that our eyes look just alike. I was surprised to realize then that we do look quite a bit like each other, and I became preoccupied with the thought that people will identify Shane as my brother.

## Hear My Soul Sing

We spend the rest of the morning in the private, secure cocoon of our dorm room just talking together about our lives before college. Neither one of us have ever had friends with such amazingly similar family circumstances.

I share how I've always loved my school experiences. I know that I was always withdrawn and terribly shy, but at school, I could escape the suffocating guilt about my brother that I felt at home. I studied hard and proved that I was a smart, accomplished student in order to make my parents proud of me. I never had any close friends because I was worried that they would find out about Shane and make fun of me. I got worried again when Shane was old enough to start school. I worried if I didn't continue to get good grades, I might be called retarded and then get bullied just like Shane. I also feared that one day at school, I'd possibly be going to class and run into my brother having a seizure in the school hallway.

I explain to Dana how fate stepped in and rearranged my school experience. I didn't have to explain Shane to my friends because the very year Shane started kindergarten,

Judy K Johnson

I was transferred to another school in one of Austin's black neighborhoods due to the mandatory school desegregation in A.I.S.D. that year. From then on, as I worked my way through high school, I always happened to attend a different school than Shane.

Now, in hearing about Dana and Darla's experience, I begin to realize that maybe my school situation wasn't the best after all. It enabled me to continue my denial of accepting my brother's disabilities. At the time, I considered myself lucky to go to a different school, but now I realize my family problems were never resolved.

I tell her that growing up, I felt compelled to appear perfect in order to please both my parents. I thought I could avoid the shame, pain, and critical judgments that surrounded Shane. I was afraid that someone would realize that I was not perfect and look down on me. Trying to be perfect was the way I tried to protect myself and remain unseen and unknown by others. All this really did was to numb my emotions, which I still have trouble expressing truthfully. I could not allow myself to be vulnerable and

## Hear My Soul Sing

accept reality.

Again, I sob in pain. I tell Dana all about Mother dying. I just thought I had a hard time managing my emotions when Mother was alive and spent all her time caring for Shane. But when Mother died, I suddenly got very, very angry. I can't figure it out. How is it possible I can be so mad at Mother? I loved her so much. I never even told her that I was so very sorry that I didn't draw Shane in my family portrait for school.

I continue my cathartic confession to Dana. I explain that after Mother died, I have trouble sleeping. If I think about all my secret anger when I'm in bed at night, it's impossible to fall asleep. It's inevitable that when I do sleep, my night terrors return and a scary, pale ghost behind bars appears in the corner of my room and sadly reaches out to try and touch me.

Often during my sleepless nights, I hear Shane loudly crying out for Mother. Then I'll hear Daddy's footsteps slowly going down the hall to Shane's bedroom. If I listen very closely, I hear Daddy humming Mother's lullaby to

Shane, who eventually stops crying. This is the only time, I've heard Daddy sing since Shane was born. I wonder why Daddy no longer sings to me. I'm trying to be such a good girl and not complain, but my heart is breaking for Daddy to instead come to me, hug me, and sing only to me again.

I ask Dana what she did to survive the bad times while growing up with a sibling who's handicapped. She pauses for a moment and then thoughtfully responds. She has lots of happy memories of spending time with her dear grandma when things got real bad at home. Her grandma always had special Bible verses to explain difficult times, like this one which Dana recites for me:

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

## Hear My Soul Sing

Dana lovingly describes how holidays at her grandma's house were always extra special. Every year, Dana got to spend a whole day helping Grandma set up her delightful, miniature, lighted Christmas Heritage Village Collection near Grandma's beautiful Christmas tree. At the end of the day, as they sat in pajamas sipping cups of hot chocolate, Dana and her grandma watched tiny, brightly colored lights twinkling from the miniature windows of every collectible piece. Dana's time with her very special grandma was always magical.

Dana goes on to explain that once Darla was actually diagnosed, everyone in the family seemed to understand the reality of their situation better. They clearly understood her existing health problems and what they could do for her now and what to expect in the future. This knowledge helped relieve them of constant worry over any hidden situation that might become an unexpected crisis.

A shocking new idea ignites within me. Has Shane's birth defects ever been diagnosed? I'm in the dark about what Shane's future might bring and how it will affect me.

Is Shane's condition inherited? If I have children one day, will they be born like Shane? Will Shane have other medical crises as he ages? Who will take care of Shane when Daddy can't?

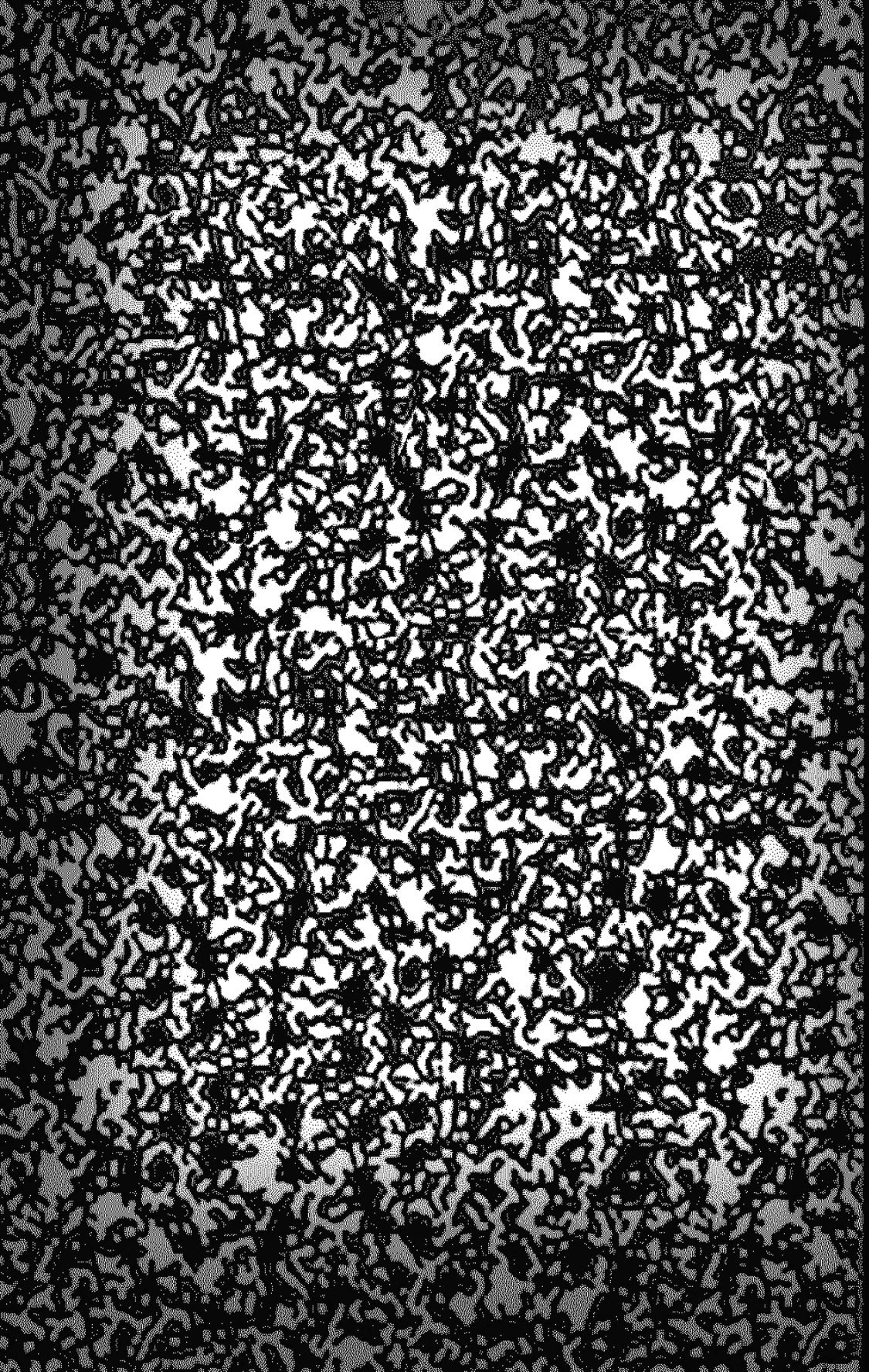
All these thoughts erupt spontaneously and cause me to hastily begin listing my own desperate, personal questions about my brother. At this very moment, I purposely start a journal, "Notes To Self," in one of my unruled composition books about significant events I recall about my past and how it affects my feelings for Shane. I hope to explore my own immense, emotional dilemmas about accepting Shane's disabilities. It's crucial that I begin to clarify and resolve my relationship with my brother.

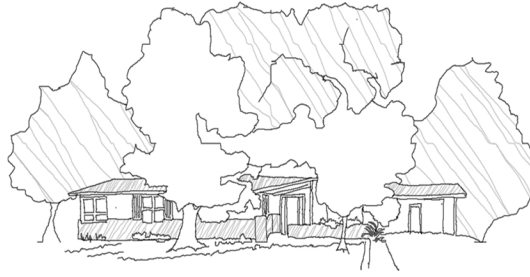
Dana and I feel our unique friendship deepen as we share our unusual, family histories. We have so much more in common than just our love of music. I feel grateful for the tremendous impact her wisdom has on my own emotional healing just as her ongoing efforts have helped me discover and continue to nurture my abundant passion for my chosen career in music therapy.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Dana's friendship reveals to me an understanding of empathy. When you recognize the true soul of someone else, then you are able to realize that you also have a true soul within yourself. When these two souls connect, blessings of love surround you, bestowing insight, wisdom, and passion that then expands to provide meaningful interactions with others in your community. I didn't understand at the time, but now I'm beginning to sense that the empathy that connected Mother and Shane empowered her desire to improve his life and filled her with deep passion.

My thoughts yearn for a pathway that I can freely follow toward my own peaceful, inspiring destiny. It's clear that I must remove one huge roadblock that has the power to limit any chance for a fulfilling life. I can no longer deny my reality. I must accept and embrace my own life. I must accept and embrace everything that has happened in my past. Like Dana, I hope to receive bountiful soul-felt blessings that are realized by embracing the reality of my sibling. Like my memories of Mother sweetly humming as she rocked Shane, I truly want to "hear my soul sing!"





Residence of Harold Walker  
Reese Drive,  
Sunset Valley, Texas

~January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1990~

Harold sat silently on Stella's observation bench just minutes before sunrise on this first day of the new decade. He had not slept throughout the night and was weary beyond description. The chirping of early-rising redbirds signaling sunrise had enticed him outdoors to seek the typical Texas cool-morning breeze that was encouraging Mony's old wind chimes to ring. His body felt heavy with the burdens that he had been carrying on his shoulders since 1974 and expected to carry forever into the future. It felt like a densely packed Navy sea bag he could never lay down to rest.

He was somehow drawn to sit on the low, sturdy observation bench he had built for his daughter and that had been decorated by Mony and Stella. The palms of his hands softly rested on his knees and his head leaned forward from the bleak weariness he felt within him. Initially, his thoughts rambled through well-worn paths in his mind, rethinking mostly sad events that he now realized he kept re-creating every time he relived them. He sternly forced

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himself to remember the good times, which at first brought peace to his soul but quickly seemed to evaporate and vanish when he found himself missing his wife and his daughter. In desperation, he searched for a way to clear all thoughts—good and bad—from his mind for just a short time.

A shy peacefulness arose within his mind, although the first attempt to clear his crowded mind was fleeting. He paused for a moment, and then tried once again to recover the peace by clearing all thoughts from his mind. He closed his eyes and inwardly attempted to feel relaxing comfort throughout his weary body. He found he was serenely listening to the reassuring sound of his own breath, which let him dwell a little longer within this peaceful zone. Deliberately, he slowed his breathing in and out—not wanting to lose this feeling of peace. His soul seemed to whisper to him that he was going to be all right.

As Harold relaxed, he allowed himself to hear the pleasant sounds around him. He found himself grateful for each sound softly approaching him—first birds cheerfully calling one another, then soft tingling sounds of wind chimes at the far end of his garden. He began to be aware of even the most minute sounds, like branches softly brushing rustling leaves together as they swayed softly in the same cool breeze that he enjoyed upon his cheek. He heard the slightest swish of some creatures moving through the rows of cabbage, spinach and kale in his winter garden. In his imagination, he pictured several wild rabbits hop into the expanse of the yard beyond the garden. The thought reminded Harold of Stella, and he smiled.

Harold began to enjoy an awareness within that seemed to be observing the world from a quiet, undisturbed place. He even started feeling sensations from his own body, which amazed him because lately he had only been able to feel headaches brought on by old worry and familiar feelings of inadequacy. He felt an itch on the bottom of his bare foot that he noted but did not react to by scratching. He became aware of tight, twisted muscles in

## Hear My Soul Sing

his shoulders that he did directly address by consciously relaxing them. He felt his stomach softly rumble in hunger, which made him smile again.

He felt amazing peace followed by a calm reassurance that he could care for his weary soul by returning to this nurturing, meditative pose in the future. He continued to listen to his slow deep breathing while he simply observed fleeting thoughts that began to feel as if they were merely light, floating clouds moving above him. He began to realize that he was a human being intentionally doing the very best he could in all circumstances. He finally forgave himself for the heavy guilt he always carried in his back pocket. The thought arose in his mind that he needed to trust his instincts. His deep, natural internal self was good, and he was not at fault for the events that caused such intense sadness in his life.

Harold slowly opened his eyes just in time to observe what he distinctly felt was his first peaceful observance since Shane's birth—the pure coral-pink sky just moments before the rising sun. The florescent color was like a watercolor wash of vivid pastel across dark low floating clouds above. Within minutes, the sky was flooded with brilliance as a breathtaking, bright golden sun rose entirely into view and instantly became too intense to gaze upon. He knew then that he would find a healthy path to freedom from guilt and sadness. Harold had no way of knowing it, but Stella, with her nose pressed against the east-facing window of her room in Guinn Residence Hall, was witnessing the same brilliant sunrise and feeling the same effects from the magnificent dawn sky.

Harold made a commitment going forward into this brand new decade. He would not condemn himself to painful, reoccurring guilt but instead find new awareness of his own human self. He would accept the life ahead of him instead of mourn the life he and Mony had planned together. He wanted to embrace his family just as it was and would be in the future. This self-awareness was the best gift of the new year. Harold felt the day's revelation

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had been a gift from his wife Mony, whom he now considered heaven's most precious angel. He would think of her now with only love, not sadness. Deliberately for the sake of his remaining family, he would leave behind the pain of her much-too-early death. Harold lifted his fingers to softly touch his Happy Buddha beads around his neck and felt as if somehow Mony's delicate hand had magically touched his heart.

Harold had one last thought before he rose from Stella's observation bench. Perhaps he could enlighten Shane with similar self-acceptance and awareness of all life around him. This was his second commitment for the new decade. For now, he looked forward to just going inside and preparing breakfast for himself and Shane.

As Harold opened the back door to the house, he knew Shane was already awake but still in his bedroom playing his favorite CDs on the new CD player he received for Christmas. Harold softly chuckled as he heard the whistling intro to "Don't Worry, Be Happy," which was Shane's favorite CD. It was apparent that Shane was already choosing happiness over other choices. Harold got an idea that they might go to Waterloo Records for another adventure soon.

Shane became excited about a trip to buy some more CDs when Harold suggested the idea. When they arrived a few days later, they thoroughly explored all the rows of different genre displays in the music store. Bob Dylan's CD album "Oh Mercy" immediately attracted Harold's attention. He read the list of tracks and noticed one title, "Shooting Star." As Harold previewed it on headphones, he felt the strumming of the opening acoustic guitar remind him of when he used to play guitar. One line of the song was, "Seen a shooting star tonight. And I thought of you." Instantly, Harold thought of his Mony. Whenever Harold became preoccupied gazing at stars in the sky, he always felt close to Mony's sweet love. Since Mony's passing, when he looked skyward at night, the first visible star reminded him of her

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promise to always be with him and indeed he always seemed to feel her presence. Another line in the lyrics that touched Harold was “if I ever became what you wanted me to be?” His renewed commitment on New Year's Day left him confident that he could go forward in self-awareness, discarding old guilt and remorse. He would go forward caring for his children the way Mony had intended in her final words. He wanted his family to feel comfortable with one another and also comfortable within their local community.

Harold and Shane ended up purchasing a few Bob Dylan CDs, and Harold especially looked forward to enjoying the “Oh Mercy” CD album, which was highly recommended by the salesperson at the counter. They chatted about wishing they could play such fine music themselves.

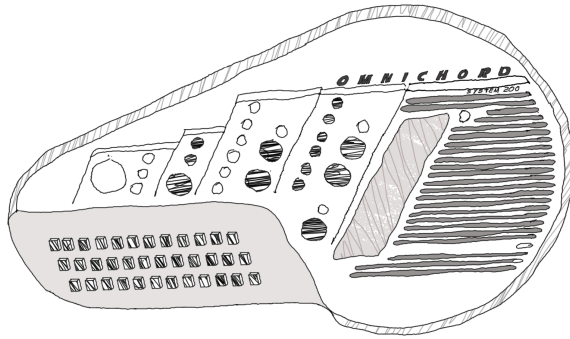
Lately, Harold had increasingly realized that both he and Shane were missing Stella's piano music flowing throughout the house. Obviously, he had somewhat addressed this predicament by investing in a large music CD collection. Now, he wondered if he might even get Shane somehow involved in learning to play a musical instrument and fill their house once more with Shane's own melodies.

As Harold and Shane walked toward the exit at Waterloo Records, another store clerk who had heard the comment about wanting to play music like Bob Dylan remarked that one of the songs on the CD album featured an electronic Suzuki Omnichord, which was essentially an electronic autoharp with buttons that changed chords while you played. He assured them that anyone could play an Omnichord with just a little practice. When Harold remarked that he had never heard of an electronic autoharp, the store clerk advised him to inquire at Strait Music Company. Feeling Mony's guidance, Harold resolved that he would stop by the music store soon to see if this musical instrument would be appropriate for Shane.

Within a week, Harold visited Strait Music Company and placed an order with the Suzuki Musical Instrument Corporation U.S. Distribution center in

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San Diego, California, for the Omnichord OM200M. Upon its arrival, Harold kept the instrument a secret until he had practiced with it himself. He was pleased that, just as the store clerk at Waterloo Records had suggested, the Omnichord was very easy to play.



Buttons were located in three rows on the front of the Omnichord, and each played a different chord. Music was played by holding down a chord button with the left hand while sliding fingers of the right hand across the strum plate. Since most songs are made up of three or four chords played in rotation, Harold devised a plan to put tiny felt stickers labeled 1,2, 3, and 4 on the chord buttons used in a song. Then he as he called out the number for the correct chord, Shane could hold down that button with his left index finger and strum with his right hand.

As Harold worked out the chords to Shane's favorite CDs, he was sure that Shane would be thrilled playing music all by himself. The first song Harold planned to show Shane was "Don't Worry, Be Happy". The Walker residence was once again filled with music. Shane became very proud of his new musical self expression. He was not even bashful about using his disfigured left hand to hold down the chord buttons. Harold helped him learn the proper chord buttons to play on every song, so it became a partnership that fostered confidence and the love of music.

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As Harold worked with Shane playing music on the Omnichord, he started remembering all the chords and lyrics for songs that in the distant past he sang for Mony and Stella. He realized that Shane had never heard these songs before—he had not played his guitar since Shane was born with all his disabilities. Shane was soon just as delighted as Stella and Mony had been with all of Harold's music, which now flowed easily out of his memory as if he had never stopped playing.

Just like Stella used to played her piano continuously, Shane often spent hours practicing his Omnichord nearly every day. The heart of the Walker residence was once more alive with the rhythm of heartfelt music. Shane even began singing many simple choruses along with Harold, who then began to sing in harmony as a duet. Harold realized that their souls continued to heal as their voices blended together.



Pots & Plants Garden Center  
Bee Cave Road & Loop 360  
Austin, Texas

~December 2, 1990~

Harold and Shane strolled among flamingos at the Pots & Plants Garden Center. The pleasant weather in Texas that day encouraged the Walker father and son to roam outdoors and spend their day exploring the area for adventure. Driving by Bee Cave Road on the Loop, Shane hollered out at the top of his lungs while bouncing wildly on the passenger seat of their red Honda Civic Wagon 4WD and pointing at the nearby hillside covered with literally hundreds of flamingos. Harold, in search of a fun-filled day for the two of them, took the next exit and routed their station wagon back to this amazing spectacle.

Shane dashed ahead of Harold to the edge of the field of plastic lawn ornament flamingos, where he stood mystified by the arrangement before him. On his left were maroon-colored flamingos lying on their sides flat on the ground. On his right stood upright orange-colored flamingos all facing the fallen maroon flamingos. In a moment, Harold burst out laughing because Shane appeared very puzzled by the strange scene before him.

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Eventually, Harold's laughter subsided, allowing him to explain the symbolism of the fallen maroon and the standing orange flamingos. The previous day, the Big 12 conference football game between the Texas A&M Aggies and the Texas Longhorns had taken place in Austin. The whole city had celebrated the victory of the Longhorns over the Aggies; the breathtaking game's final score was 28 over 27. Harold pointed out that the fallen maroon flamingos represented the Aggies, and the standing orange flamingos represented the Longhorns. Finally, Shane seemed to understand and joined in with Harold's jovial laughter.

Harold happily enticed Shane over to the pink flamingo display near the potted plant sales, suggesting that Shane pick out a pair of flamingos to place in their yard at home. Shane remembered that Stella's observation bench was decorated in white doves and pink flamingos although he wasn't quite sure just how or why the bench had been built.

Shane himself carried the carefully selected pair of pink flamingos over to the checkout counter. As he stood in line behind a number of customers holding various plants, garden supplies, and flamingos, he became distracted by a tiny whimpering sound coming from under the outdoor table where the cash register was placed. Harold took charge of the flamingos as Shane twisted and turned, trying to peer around the other store customers ahead of him. At last, as they moved to the head of the line, Shane dropped to his knees on the ground and stared into the cool shade beneath the table. Harold, himself, bent over to investigate the source of Shane's unwavering attention and saw his son softly petting a cute, bright-eyed White German Shepherd puppy with a shiny black nose.

Harold glanced over at the cashier to discern if she approved of his son petting the friendly puppy beneath the table. He was relieved to see an immense smile on her face as they exchanged greetings. The cashier laughed and introduced herself as Pat Swanson, the owner of the garden center, and

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assured Harold that lots of kids disappeared beneath the counter when they reached the front of the checkout line. Harold returned his gaze to his son, who was now embracing the puppy and cooing a soft melody to the puppy that reminded him of Mony's lullaby. For a brief moment, Harold felt as if Mony was tickling his memory and sending a suggestion to his heart.

Harold looked back at Pat and asked where she had acquired the precious puppy. Smiling again with a look of understanding, Pat replied that this puppy was one of a litter that had been rescued and was currently up for adoption at the Central Texas SPCA, where she had picked up her puppy just last week. Then, as Pat handed Harold his receipt for the pair of pink flamingos, she winked and suggested that if he hurried to the rescue center, there might just be a few puppies left for adoption. Harold asked her for directions for the easiest route there from the garden center. Harold eagerly shook Pat's hand and advised Shane, now reluctant to leave the puppy's side, that they needed to leave.

Harold reminded Shane to put on his seat belt as he hurriedly started up their station wagon. Harold turned on the CD player on the dash and the currently inserted CD started playing "Don't Worry, Be Happy." Shane finally joined in on the whistling introduction to the song, and Harold reached his hand up to touch Mony's Happy Buddha beads around his neck, smiling as he turned the red Honda Civic Wagon 4WD in the direction that Pat had indicated.

Harold continued up Loop 360 until he reached the Hwy 183 North exit. He continued on through Cedar Park until he reached Leander, Texas, where he found Baghdad Road. The trip was about thirty miles but took 45 minutes because of traffic. He was in a little bit of a hurry because Pat had also said that Central Texas SPCA was open on Sundays but only from noon until 5 p.m.

Harold stayed quiet about their destination, even when Shane became

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quite irritated and wanted to go home and find a place in the yard to put his pink flamingos. He thought they would look nice among the pink daisies his Mother loved. Harold didn't want to get Shane's hopes up that there might be some White German Shepherd puppies left from the litter at the shelter.

As they entered the lobby, a receptionist at the counter looked up from a notebook and asked if they were the customers from the Pots & Plants Garden Center. Harold was a little surprised but grinned as the receptionist explained that he had received a call from Pat recommending them as good prospects for adoption of a puppy. The receptionist introduced Harold and Shane to an official adoption counselor who interviewed Harold and Shane about the requirements and responsibilities of dog adoption.

Shane seemed curious but didn't quite grasp the idea that they might actually leave with a puppy. Finally, the staff at the rescue center seemed satisfied with all the arrangements, and Harold signed paperwork about obligations he promised to meet for the puppy. Shane and Harold were then led over to a doorway that opened to reveal a large outdoor dog run. A few steps later, Shane realized that he was in an enclosure that contained many dogs running and playing in an area that included water pools, lots of toys, and resting areas. He paused, glancing all around and then glancing back at Harold with a look on his face that could not be described. Harold knew its significance because it made his heart leap for joy.

Harold caught up to Shane on the ground reaching his hand out to one special, cute, bright-eyed white puppy with a shiny black nose. There was no further deliberation to be made. Three similar puppies remained from this rescued litter, but the one that stood out to Shane was the one who ran over to meet him with his shiny black nose poking out to sniff his disfigured hand which he immediately started to lick in excitement. In seconds, Shane's own nose was being licked with equal joyful abandon.

The puppy, instantly named Sarge by Shane (as if he and the puppy had

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always known each other), rode on Shane's lap the whole way home. They stopped only momentarily at a new Tomlinson's Pets Cedar Park in the HEB shopping center to pick up a puppy collar, leash, dog food, and dog crate so Sarge could sleep next to Shane's bed while he was being house-trained.

Shane and Sarge ran, romped, and wrestled in the backyard until sunset. Harold sat on his observation bench thinking about how Mony would be smiling down on them. Eventually, Harold led a sleepy, staggering Shane carrying a sleepy Sarge in his arms to Shane's bedroom. It was only minutes until both were sound asleep, Sarge in the dog crate and Shane under his bed covers. Before Shane nodded off, Harold heard him humming his "Mony" lullaby again to his own best friend puppy, Sarge. Harold stood looking over these new buddies and realized that new dogs don't instantly fill an empty place in one's heart, but they do fill the empty place in one's house.

This was just the beginning of a beautiful boy and dog friendship. In the upcoming weeks, months, and years, boy and dog would seldom be separated; they were always side by side, simply completely happy with each other. Shane grew to become quite comfortable in public with Sarge because it became obvious to him that people stopped staring at him and instead admired his beautiful White German Shepherd. It was just as obvious to these people that Sarge adored and protected Shane more than any other human, never leaving his side. If Sarge ever sensed any frustration in Shane, he responded by leaning against Shane's legs and licking his fingers. Shane would then pause, look down at Sarge, and always grin at his best friend. Shane began to learn that he did not need to be concerned with things that upset him. He could choose to look at his dog and enjoy how happy Sarge made him feel.

Both father and son were making choices to follow more pleasant pathways through life.

Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



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Residence of Harold Walker  
Reese Drive,  
Sunset Valley, Texas

- Documenting December 13, 1990 -

Daddy's letter about Shane's new puppy entices me home to from college for one of my infrequent visits. The same overpowering internal guilt that forced me to flee off to college now forces me to return home for a short visit to reconnect with Daddy and Shane. Clearly, Shane and his new White German Shepherd puppy are inseparable.

## Hear My Soul Sing

Even though Sarge is still just a puppy, it's amazing how he seems to monitor Shane's moods at all times. When Shane becomes moody or angry over even a simple happenstance, such as an empty peanut butter jar, Sarge will immediately press up against Shane's body, licking whatever he can reach—Shane's cheeks or his hands—especially his disfigured two-fingered hand. Shane will quickly dissolve into giggles and wrap his arms around Sarge's body. Sarge's tail will sweep widely with enough momentum to also swing his body from side to side in pure delight. I can see that Sarge's interactions are tremendous therapy for Shane—also, a big comfort for Daddy.

Daddy and Shane have also planned an Omnichord recital for me upon my arrival. I learn to my amazement that Shane's favorite CD lately has been "Don't Worry, Be Happy," which he plays whenever he has the chance. Daddy tells me about sitting down with Shane's Omnichord and figuring out that three simple chords, D, E minor, and G, played in the same sequence over and over, are all that are needed to play this song.

They practiced together every day learning the transitions correctly. Daddy describes how Sarge eagerly sits watching their practice sessions. Every time they get to the whistling part, Sarge will jump up and lick Shane's face while wildly swinging his tail. Daddy tells me about making up an easy verse for Shane to sing along with the whistling refrain that he already accomplishes with ease.

My Sarge and I are always together,  
We'll be very best friends forever,  
No worries, we're happy!  
(whistle, whistle, whistle...)

Shane's recital takes place in the sunroom where my old piano sits silent, waiting to be played. When Shane finishes his song, I suggest we do it all over again so that I can play along on my piano. As I play chords to blend along with Shane's Omnichord, Daddy joins in singing Shane's own special verse. Sarge jumps from person to person, licking cheeks at the happy whistling part.

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It seems when we let our guard down and forget our guilt or worries, we truly seem to realize natural family instincts. After Shane's Omnichord concert, a brief moment of amazing realization overcomes my guilt, and I rush to my brother, throwing my arms about his neck in an eager heart-felt hug. A lifetime of fearful, internal instincts that have prevented me from touching him seems to melt away in an instant. Somewhat startled at my very first hug effort, Shane strongly pulls away from me, looking up at me with a confused, suspicious expression on his face. Pushing my arm away with his disfigured left hand, he defiantly declares that I don't love him like his Mama did. Shocked beyond words, I realize he actually carries the same deeply embedded pain as I do, and he's tragically aware that something different about him usually prevents me from wanting to be close to him.

I realize that all this time, his entire lifetime, he's felt the painful distance I purposely put between us to protect myself. Sarge, instinctively worried for his master, turns his head, whining at me with utmost concern. A stream of

tears shows on Daddy's cheeks. How might we all heal from our past?

I promise Shane that we will have lots of good times in the future. We will learn to love each other like Mother loved us. Relieved but still protecting Shane, Sarge starts slowly wagging his tail while Shane hugs him with passion. I wonder why I feel so jealous of the hug so freely given to Sarge.

Shane's instant ability with Sarge to push forward through frustration becomes an instant blessing to my long wounded heart. A tiny spark of empathy for my brother flashes at that moment. I'm able, for a split second, to realize how, in the future, our relationship might possibly become the blessing of a peaceful heart at long last.

That night, unable to fall asleep in my own bedroom, I tiptoe down the hallway to look in on Shane. Quietly opening the door, I can see Sarge's head immediately pop up from the pillow suspiciously watching to see who's entering his master's room. He's lying side by side with Shane, his paw resting softly across Shane's back. Eventually satisfied

## Hear My Soul Sing

that I mean no harm, Sarge slowly lowers his head back down and, at peace, audibly sighs. Shane will have no need to ever worry in the night.

Early the next morning, I look out the kitchen window to watch Sarge and Shane, now 16 years old, play roly-poly in the back yard. Daddy sits near the garden's edge on my old bench, which he sentimentally still calls an observation bench. I'm pleased to see him relaxed and content as he too gazes upon Shane and Sarge's antics. For that moment, our world is at peace.

Then I remember today's *Austin American-Statesman* clutched in my hand, which I just picked up from the counter. A front-page story has caught my immediate attention, and I want to read it privately beyond the sight of Daddy and Shane. The headline reads "Signs: Don't eat the fish. Markers warn of chlordane danger."

The newspaper describes how permanent signs are being erected around Town Lake that repeat a health warning against eating fish caught in the lake. Tests by local and state health officials show that nearly all the species of

fish in Town Lake contain various levels of the banned pesticide chlordane. The newspaper refers to a news release from the Texas Department of Health. The TDH advisory reinforces a similar alert issued by local health officials three years ago. Although the earlier alert warned of contamination in some fish species, testing of fish from the lake since 1987 shows that unsafe concentrations of chlordane have actually been accumulating in Town Lake since the '70s and persist in nearly all species tested.

Chlordane, once commonly used for termite control, was banned in 1987 when the chemical was found to be a possible cancer-causing agent similar to DDT. Chlordane is not easily soluble in water. Therefore it can be expected to be detected in lake sediments for years to come. At this time it is thought to be a possible cause of certain birth defects and even cancer.

I know I'll want to investigate this information further, probably at the TWU Blagg Huey Library. The newspaper article sends chills up my spine, and I have trouble keeping myself calm for the rest of my weekend at home. Birth

## Hear My Soul Sing

defect? Cancer? Is chlordane the cause of all my families catastrophes? Daddy never wants to talk about bad memories.

Memories flood my thoughts about the countless fishing trips Mother and Daddy took me on as a happy toddler. It was a frequently occurring adventure for years. Mother loved to fish and we went many times a week down to Town Lake. She was a successful fisherman and always hurried home to cook her catch of the day. We all ate her fried catfish or sunfish, but Mother always consumed the most by far. She tasted as she fried, ate her fair share at our tiny dining table, and finally finished off any remaining leftovers each and every time. Daddy teased her about her love of single-handedly catching and eating most of the fish in Town Lake. He often just stayed on the blanket at the edge of the lake playing love songs for me on his acoustic guitar. Mother ate a ton of fish!

Concerned about the dreadful knowledge I might uncover soon, I hurriedly give hugs and kisses to all three, Shane, Daddy, and Sarge, and give a fictitious excuse to rush

back to Texas Woman's University early Sunday afternoon. I drive nonstop to Denton and go straight to Blagg Huey Library; I stay well past dark, sitting at a dimly lit, long, narrow study table near the Biology/Medical section with medical reference books stacked high around me, my tired eyes peering through one page after another.

These are some of the many notes I make while doing research:

1. Chlordane was used extensively as an insecticide in the U.S. from 1947 until the 1980s. It was widely used for termite control in the southern U.S. It was also used to kill insects and weeds in crops, gardens, and turf. Its use on food crops was outlawed in 1978 by the EPA. It was totally banned in 1988.

2. Chlordane can remain in soils for over twenty years and carried by water run-off into rivers and lakebeds where fish feed. Chlordane can build up and accumulate in the fat tissue of fish that have lived in contaminated bodies of water.

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3. About 2-4% of live-born children have congenital birth defects. Environmental agents are an important risk factor. Pesticides may alter the growth and development of normal organ function. Studies of maternal exposure to certain types of pesticides may possibly cause anencephaly, cleft palate, limb malformations, biliary atresia, heart defects, and facial or eye deformations.

4. Some reports show that chlordane exposure might be linked to cancer. Chlordane can build up in human breast fat, where it may act like estrogen. Chlordane increases the rate of estrogen breakdown in the liver, which may be cancer promoting. More studies are needed to further investigate whether higher body levels of chlordane and its breakdown products are associated with an increased risk of developing breast cancer.

5. Chlordane may cause behavioral disorders in infants exposed before birth.

I'm just about ready to call it a night, when my gaze falls upon a periodical among those I've stacked near me.

There's an article that caught my eye about Chalmers Courts in Austin, Texas, summarizing problems facing public housing. It seems that HUD turned down applications for funds to rebuild the development where my parents and I had lived before Shane was born. Chalmer Courts, built in 1939, has multiple problems that do not meet code such as sewer, plumbing, heating and electrical systems that are impossible to repair since they are embedded in concrete floors, ceilings, and masonry walls. Removing lead-based paint and asbestos floor tile, sinks, and wall texture is extremely expensive and virtually impossible to update.

Further time-consuming research provides details about how lead causes possible birth defects such as neurological damage, developmental delays, skin marking (including skin tags), and slowed postnatal neurobehavioral development. I cannot find any information on asbestos causing birth defects. It is, however, a known cause of lung cancer.

By the time I finally get back to my dorm room, Dana is visibly worried about my prolonged absence. She remains concerned when she sees my own worried expression. We sit

## Hear My Soul Sing

up even later discussing the information I've uncovered.

I feel very fortunate to have Dana as such a good friend. She generously shares her own experiences and very patiently listens when I try to explain all my efforts to discover the cause of Shane's birth defects. After we go over my notes and also carefully review the *Austin American-Statesman* newspaper I've smuggled from home, she suggests a way for me to become more organized in my search. She's well aware of the countless possibilities to be explored when reviewing causes of birth defects.

Dana suggests that I start by listing in my journal all the known medical conditions in Shane's history. Keeping myself aware of all his unique disabilities will help me stay focused. She also recommends that I might take a genetics class or even counsel with a genetics professor at TWU after I've discovered all I can on my own.

Dana's soft-spoken advice reminds me of her peaceful nature. There's no way that worry and fear can change history. My real journey is for knowledge and acceptance. That journey is best undertaken with a calm, sincere,

accepting heart. With her counseling, I'm able to relax and become determined to stay organized and reflective. This past weekend, I have witnessed that my family is at present getting along just fine. Shane and Daddy have developed an amazing, serene home environment now populated with an additional family member, Sarge. Knowledge of Shane's birth defects will primarily bring increased awareness of ways to move more successfully into the future.

So picking through my bad memories, I start this list of Shane's medical conditions at birth with comments about changes as he grew older:

1. Multiple, red, sore lesions or scabs across the side of Shane's left cheek.

2. His left eye is very small and deformed, angled sideways, with a white film covering almost his entire eye. Later it's determined that he is actually blind in that eye and he is fitted with a scleral shell.

3. His left arm and hand have some swollen, red zigzag-

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shaped sores like his cheek. He has trouble moving this arm, which is smaller and weaker than his right arm.

4. His left hand has small stubs in place of three missing fingers; only the thumb and opposing index finger are fully formed.

5. His left leg has more scarring. It is shorter and thinner than his right leg; the left leg also has a clubfoot that required long-term bracing. He has motor skills issues with this leg.

6. When he is a few months old, he starts having seizures that are somewhat controlled by medication and have lessened as he grows older.

7. He often has emotional outbursts of anger that may be caused by pain or related to painful digestive issues. Mother often talked about Shane's bad tummy aches.

8. He is slow at acquiring speech. As he grows older, it is determined that he is a slow learner and categorized as mentally retarded at school.

9. As he grows up, he still has strength issues, but after his clubfoot is treated, and with years of Mother's

daily exercises, he is able to walk and run but with a noticeable limp. He lacks coordination with his arms but can write his name and simple words with his right hand.

Making this list makes me realize all that Shane has had to deal with growing up and has actually accepted with good humor at this stage of his life. My journey to discover the cause of Shane's birth defects has become more realistic and much less intimidating. Dana offers to join my search and helps me examine information in a healthy way, not out of my usual guilt or worry about proving my worth.

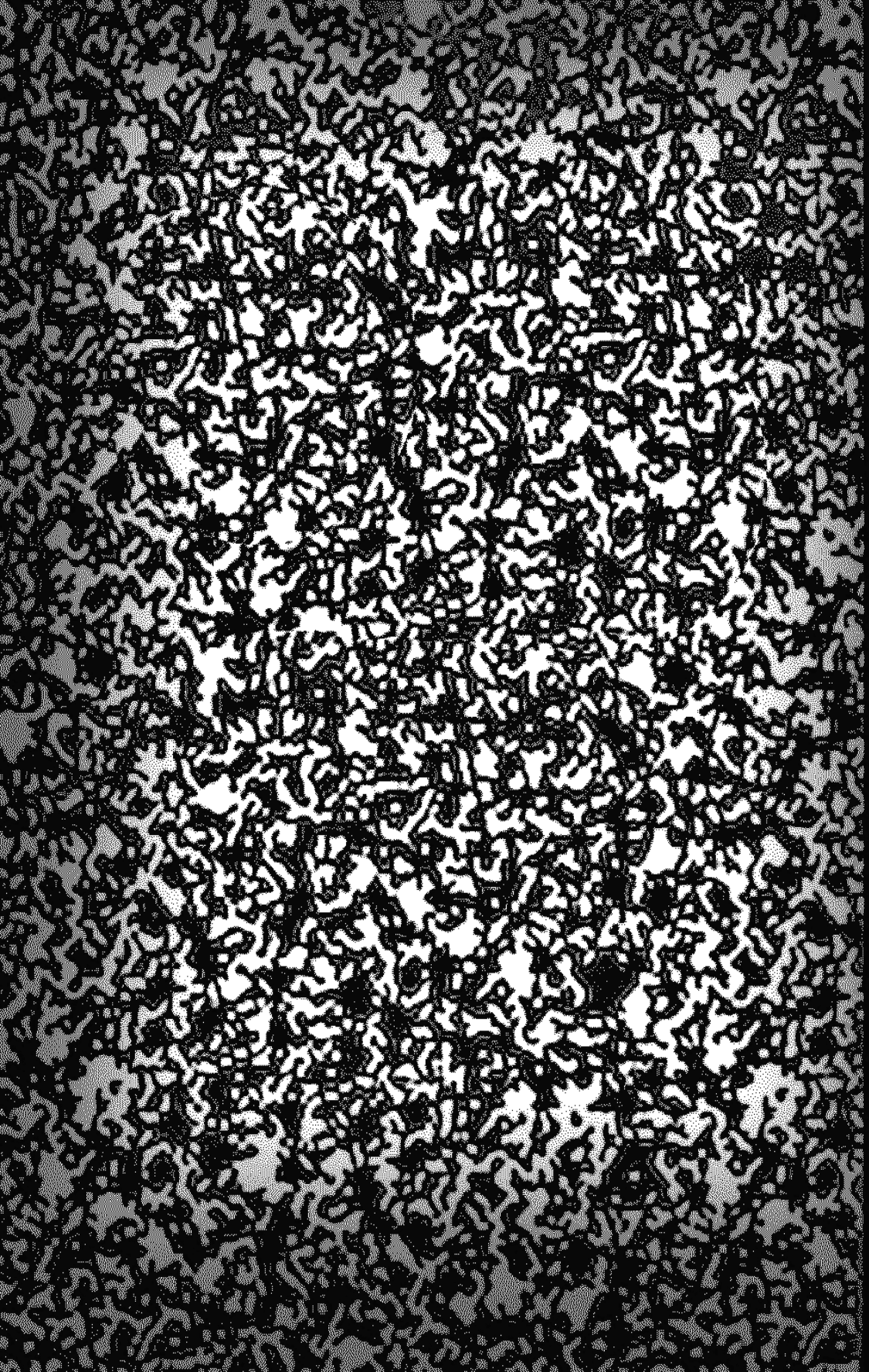
This journey of discovery will take some time if I'm to examine every part of my family and my past. I intend to explore all the resources at Blagg Huey Library which can lead me to somehow discover the source of my brother's disabilities and how they might affect my own future. While I continue my search, I'm starting to realize that I do really care for my brother more than I ever thought possible.

At this point in my college career, my experiences with my music therapy studies also continually reinforce the

## Hear My Soul Sing

power of music to open one's soul and fill it with empathy. I feel compelled to completely integrate my musical passion into my family, my career, and my future. I start to imagine the many different types of songs I will sing and instruments I will play.

I think about starting a sheet music collection of various styles and tempos of music. Then I think about starting a collection of all sorts of musical instruments from cymbals to flutes to xylophones to drums to share with my future clients. I realize that, unlike the past, now I easily wear a big smile on my face most of the time—especially whenever these future career dreams fill my thoughts.



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Blagg Huey Library  
Texas Woman's University  
Denton, TX

~ August 20, 1991~

Sitting at her usual spot at the far end of a long study table beside a never-ending row of bookshelves, Stella poured over her worksheet for the Bachelor of Science, music therapy major study courses, which detailed 133-145 hours of study in required courses for credit toward her degree plan. Blagg Huey Library was one of her favorite study hangouts. The shelves held over 500,000 books at her disposal for study both personal and academic.

Her personal study involved searching through volumes and volumes of medical textbooks and periodicals, looking for any clues to solving the mystery of her brother's disabilities and in order to discover what his medical future might include. Also, excelling in academia had always been a great source of comfort that sustained Stella's self-worth. Her recent years of stellar academic success at Texas Woman's University had pretty much fulfilled the state core courses requirement, which totaled 42 hours of credit from her communication, philosophy, American history, government, mathematics, biology, creative arts (music and world cultures), and behavioral science

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classes, plus an elective class of music wellness.

In her music therapy track courses, she had already taken Music Keyboard 1021, 1031, and 2061. Her love of piano made these courses seem easy, and the courses were a source of pure enjoyment. She had already also completed Music 3301, Guitar Class. She enrolled in at least one piano or guitar class every semester and smiled as she thought of her favorite music professor, Dr. Hadsell. Now she was ready to start working through her remaining music major requirements, and she was anxious to get started on her preferred choices. Stella had become progressively more confident of her future career in music therapy, which, as time went by, was clearly becoming an immense passion and source of fulfillment.

Stella's remaining course choices included many advanced psychology, biology, and music therapy courses: developmental psychology, abnormal psychology, human biology, introduction to music therapy, music skills for therapy and recreation, psychology of music, and advanced music therapy practicum. And of course, the most important of all, music therapy internship taken when all other coursework is satisfactorily completed.

MT internship was a six month, full-time work experience under the direct supervision of a qualified music therapist. Stella already had attained the proficiency requirements for two instruments, piano and guitar, which was actually twice the level required before she could complete her practicum and internship. Once she completed her undergraduate program, Stella would be eligible to be certified by taking a board exam in music therapy through the Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT).

However, at this moment, Stella also had an ulterior motive in searching through the college handbook of courses offered. She circled BIOL 4013, Human Genetics, and was delighted to find that the course was being offered this semester. With Dana's help and encouragement, Stella had created her journal list of details concerning Shane's lifetime of disabilities. She was

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ready to proceed with her journey to uncover the source of his disabilities and to determine how they would affect their future lives. Did she have real reason to fear having children who might have Shane's handicaps? Would she be able to fix relationship problems with Shane? She was on a journey to discover the answer to why she felt so guilty about Shane's last remark to her, "You don't love me like my Mama did!"

As always, academia was a resource that calmed and settled Stella's fears and guilt. Through long hours of study in the library, Stella compiled a list of categories that she researched whenever she had any free time from her classes. After previously reading the *Austin American Statesman* newspaper on unsafe chlordane levels in Town Lake, Stella realized that birth defects might not be exclusively a result of genetic disorders that have the potential to get passed on to any children Stella might have in the future. Dana helped her put together categories of teratogenic (nongenetic) causes of birth defects—Toxic Metals, Chemical Exposure, Radiation Exposure, Maternal Conditions, and Fetal Virus Infections.

As Stella accumulated information and documented case histories on possible sources for Shane's birth defects, she added them to her categories. She included lead and mercury poisoning under toxic metals; Toluene, PCBs, and chlordane under chemical exposure; iodine deficiency, folic acid deficiency, smoking, anti-nausea medication, and accutane medication under maternal conditions; and the polio virus and syphilis under fetal virus infections. Her collection of lists swelled with previously unknown symptoms that never quite fully identified Shane's situation.

Stella knew she would have to pursue a similar investigation into genetic possibilities. These lists were even more extensive, often with multiple similar characteristics shared by many genetic or inherited factors. She hoped that eventually there would be a most probable scenario revealed by medical textbooks available for her scrutiny. She was eager to begin BIOL 4013,

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Human Genetics, to focus on possible causes of Shane's birth defects.

Stella was also developing a huge appreciation for the multitude of parents who never had the cause and treatment of their child's birth defect clearly defined. Without a diagnosis, parents felt they lacked support or knowledge to help their child, and they just struggled to find other similar conditions that might offer a clue to possible treatment or a solution one tiny step at a time. It fit the expression of impossibly trying to find "a needle in a haystack."

Even if her own personal search was not yet conclusive, she began to realize that insights she gained from her own intellectual pursuit would help her understand and appreciate future clients' circumstances when she worked with them through music therapy. She thoughtfully pondered her memory of Shane, Harold, and herself playing their family rendition of "Don't Worry, Be Happy." Her first clarified insight at that moment was her increasing respect for people with disabilities and their families who are struggling to have a meaningful life. Living in a family with disabilities is a lifetime adjustment that has to be considered, appreciated, and supported every day of one's life.

Stella, however, was still hoping she would stumble upon some insight into Shane's disabilities. She had questioned her father sometime after the death of her mother about Shane's birth defects. Harold had simply shrugged and with a sad expression on his face, similar to the face she remembers in her night terror-memories.

"Doctors just told us Shane's birth defects were possibly unrelated and at the time of his birth undiagnosed. They told us to focus on immediately treating his skin lesions, which were miserably painful but not life threatening, then on trying to improve his clubfoot as much as possible. As he grew up, we were to focus on therapy for muscular weakness and coordination. They warned about blindness in his bad eye but never mentioned the possibility of mental retardation. We pretty much had to

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discover things as time went by, like when his seizures started. Actually, your mother always figured out better ways to treat him than the recommendations that his doctors made at his checkups. It was most frustrating for Mony, but she never gave up on Shane,” Harold replied forlornly.

Harold’s last sentence played over and over in Stella’s mind. Even as time went by, whenever she tried to relax or fall to sleep, she often heard it replay once again.

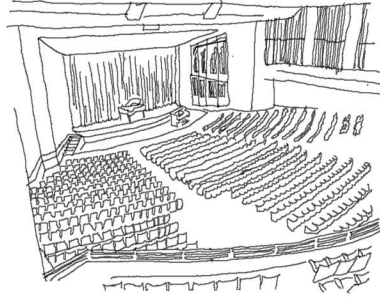
Stella’s genetic class turned out to be quite interesting. She had the gift of an analytic mind which often allowed her to uniquely solve dilemmas of undiagnosed birth defects, but her personal efforts to understand her own brother’s condition continued to elude her. She realized that she had to learn a whole foreign language of medical terms in order to be accurate in her search. Medical terms for Shane’s conditions read like a litany of entries in the national spelling bee: intrauterine growth retardation, microcephaly, cicatricial bullous lesions with dermatomal distribution, hypertrophic scars, limb and finger hypoplasia, neurological abnormalities, clubfoot, eye abnormalities (chorioretinitis and chorioretinal scarring or ocular abnormalities such as cataracts or unilateral or bilateral microphthalmia), gastrointestinal malformations, psychomotor retardation, mental retardation, sympathetic nerve fiber abnormalities controlling involuntary functions, and intermittent myoclonic seizures.

Along with her course textbooks for her Human Genetics course, she researched books in the Blagg Huey Library with such titles as: *Reproductive Risks and Prenatal Diagnosis*; *The Year Book of Neonatal and Perinatal Medicine*; *Neonatal and Perinatal Medicine*; *Fetal And Neonatal Pathology*; *Before We Are Born—Essentials Of Embryology And Birth Defects*; *Environmental Causes Of Human Birth Defects*; and *Children with Handicaps—A Medical Primer*. Her eyes grew weary as she poured through literally thousands of pages of medical textbooks.

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It seemed the more she poured through textbooks, the more she added hundreds of pieces to the ever-growing jigsaw puzzle she was trying to solve. She felt defeated in her quest. She hadn't been able to determine with any certainty the real cause of Shane's birth defects. She greatly feared she would never know the real truth. Slowly, by the end of the semester, she came to the same resolution as Harold. Even if they never knew the origin of Shane's birth defects they still had to continue to search out the best support for him as his life continued.

Stella became more clearly focused in supporting her family for the future. For her, the primary source of resolving her personal problems was her increasing music therapy skills coupled with her expanding ability to reach out with feeling of empathy to those engulfed and struggling in a world of disabilities.



Margo Jones Performance Hall  
Texas Woman's University  
Denton, Texas

~ November 12, 1993~

They chose to sit in the second-floor balcony, which contained seating for 300 of the nearly 1,100 attendees at the Fall Senior Recital. It was expected to be a full house. Harold and Shane arrived early (leaving Sunset Valley before noon that day) so that Shane would have plenty of time to look all around and have time to relax in his surroundings. Harold guided Shane to the first row of the balcony so that they could look down over the railing and closely observe the entire auditorium below them.

Shane wasn't quite sure if he even wanted to go and visit his sister, but he'd never been to such an elaborate performance theater. Harold, who had described it to Shane on their drive to Denton, suggested it would be amazing. True to his character, Shane was mesmerized looking at all the details of the distant stage below. Harold had advised Shane to carry along his old but favorite June 1991 *Sesame Street* magazine, which was neatly folded vertically and stuffed into his back pocket. The cover showed Bert asking the question, "Who can you be?" and Ernie answering, "Let your imagination

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fly!” The magazine was a backup plan to divert Shane’s attention should he became restless. Shane had matured gradually into a more socially acceptable young man. He learned skills to handle his frustration, growing into a reserved, polite teenager though he seldom spoke in public. He was always curious about his surroundings, even though his reading capability remained at a third-grade level.

Actually, the magazine wasn't necessary to preoccupy Shane, who eagerly looked all about the auditorium and among all the people attending. Harold looked carefully through his program, which on the back page highlighted facts about the facility. Artists such as John Phillip Sousa, Isaac Stern, Vladimir Horowitz, Lily Pons, Robert Frost, Yehudi Menuhin, and others had come to Texas Woman’s University to perform there. In 1987, the Hall had been closed for a \$3.5 million renovation that was completed in April 1990. Renovated features of the Hall included new lighting, motorized rigging, new sound systems, and a stage floor constructed on a cushioned rubber mounting. This information was quite interesting, but Harold was searching for something else as he turned to the center section of his program where his eyes tracked downward through the long list of performers.

In the dozen recital performances listed in the program, Harold was pleased to see Stella was listed twice, which meant to him that she must be considered quite accomplished if she had been chosen to play in two separate musical performances in the recital. He had promised Shane that they would meet up with Stella today but had kept her participation in the performances a secret.

The large stage below was set up for the first performance, a quartet. Shane commented on the huge concert harp already located at center stage. Harold told Shane that it sounded a little bit like his own Omnichord. The auditorium seemed completely filled with eager audience members. Then the lights lowered for a moment, and the auditorium became completely quiet.

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Shane sat up straight and paid attention to what began unfolding on stage. Four students entered from backstage and took their place before the crowd. Three carried instruments, a violin, an oboe, and a bass cello. Shane was mesmerized and eager to hear what sounds these instruments would make. He had inherited his father's obvious love for music.

The auditorium's excellent acoustics and sound system quality was amazing. The quartet started off with the softest pianissimo of running playful notes, but Harold and Shane could hear every minute detail of the musical score. The music sifted from playful to intense with the cello's bow being pulled slowly and sternly across the strings of the cello creating fortissimo moody melody. The harpist's fingers ran from the short high strings to the long low strings flowing in circular patterns across the harp. The oboe kept rhythm with steady low and intermediate tones often punctuated with secondary runs throughout the score of music. Shane was quite curious about the combination of sounds flowing from these unusual instruments. Even in the dim lighting, Harold observed his son connect to the tempo and emotion flowing from the quartet.

The applause reverberated in the auditorium as the lights came up and the musicians took several bows on stage. Shane clapped with enthusiasm with everyone else until once again, a moment later the lights dimmed, signaling the audience to wait in silence for the second performance. Harold was eagerly leaning forward watching stagehands roll performance platforms containing two large concert grand pianos on stage. The program listed them as a Bösendorfer and a Steinway concert grand piano. However, what really caught Harold's attention were the names of the student performers, Stella Harmony Walker and Dana Stevens. Shane was already peering at the placement of the two large grand pianos on stage. They were staged so that the two performers were looking straight at one other. The curved arches of the piano bodies seemed to fit together like puzzle pieces. From the balcony,

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Shane could see the long piano strings exposed beneath the raised lids. Harold whispered to Shane to notice the student performers now walking across the stage.

Shane's mouth dropped open, and without thinking, he stood in excitement and pointed down toward his sister when she walked across the stage. Harold reached out to tap his son's elbow to get his attention and advise him that he should remain seated and listen carefully to the music Stella was about to perform. Harold and Shane leaned together with shoulders touching and waited for Stella to begin.

The musical piano duet was breathtaking. It seemed at times as if an entire orchestra was playing while at others, a single note hung in the air. The tempo started slow and meandered through calm musical passages then jumped into quick, playful staccato movements. During one beautiful section, the music seemed almost like a lullaby. Shane and Harold looked at each other in disbelief. It was Mony's lullaby woven into the duet. Within minutes, Dana's family, seated in ground level first row seats, experienced a similar reaction as the composition presented a section of Darla's own creation.

The program listed this music as an original number composed by Stella and Dana for their music major requirements. The mood of the music led the audience on to yet another section of resounding joyful and grand melody. The audience could see that at times, the performance was supported by just one of the students, and at other times, both students moved in conjunction with one another so that it was impossible to differentiate between the two musicians. The sound of the concert grand pianos kept the entire audience enthralled with the development of the varying moods of their symphony.

There was not one split second between the end of the piano duet and the onset of applause, which was instantly deafening. The two students grinned with pleasure at each other as they approached the center of the stage and hugged before they bowed to the audience's standing ovation. In the balcony,

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Shane was shouting out his sister's name and Harold's heart burst with pride and joy at Stella's performance. This time, Shane could shout without restraint because the rest of the audience and Harold were cheering as well.

Finally, the lights dimmed again. Harold and Shane sat down, as did the rest of the audience. The rest of the program continued featuring several musical performances that were all amazing. They ranged from improvised jazz to short, intense Beethoven motifs. Since each performance was vastly different from the one before, Shane stayed interested throughout the recital. Harold suggested to him that he might see his sister one more time on the stage, so Shane closely watched all the student performers as they entered the stage.

The final performance was listed as a vocal performance self-accompanied by acoustic guitar and vocally assisted in duet. The program listing read "Stella Harmony Walker to be joined by Dana Stevens." As Stella entered the stage, Harold's eyes instantly filled with tears. Stella, usually known for wearing drab, colorless outfits was wearing Mony's vibrant, radiantly colorful bohemian wedding skirt with the peasant blouse and carrying Harold's Stella Harmony acoustic guitar for which his daughter was named. Looking down from the balcony, he could see the psychedelic orange daisies on the guitar strap just as Mony had noticed them back at Woodstock when they first met. Harold felt his heart skip a beat and knew that Mony must be looking down from heaven in delight, just as he was looking down from the balcony.

Stella's guitar performance was a medley of folk tunes from the last three decades. Harold recalled that many of them he had played himself for Mony and Stella years ago. Stella started her medley of songs alone on the stage. The final section of her performance featured "Love Can Build a Bridge," which had been recorded the previous year by The Judd's family duo and had become a Top 5 country hit. As she progressed to the closing duet section,

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Dana entered from side stage. She joined her voice with Stella's in an audience-pleasing duet on the chorus. Holding hands, they sang the last verse acapella, and then Stella strummed her guitar as they sang the final chorus together. Harold was sure that he was hearing his daughter sing from the depths of her soul. The lyrics emphatically proclaimed that it was time to stand together, and that, with love, the heart's desires can be accomplished. Harold hoped that Stella was prophesying the future of his family.

The last chorus was not even over before the audience rose to their feet without hesitation feeling pure, intense, love as Stella played and sang with Dana. The audience swayed in unison until the recital's final performance completed. When it ended, they clapped and cheered. Harold realized how far his daughter had come in the two decades since hearing him sing his final heartbreaking song, "Bridge Over Troubled Water" until now at her first public performance of this medley of songs.

As the clapping and cheering continued, he smiled and reached up to touch Mony's Happy Buddha beads that he always wore unseen under his shirt collar to remember and honor her in joy. As he and Shane looked down to the stage below, all the student performers reassembled on the stage for final bows. After the final applause ended, he and Shane hurried down the stairs to meet Stella at their predesignated meeting place, the entrance to the Little Chapel-in-the-Woods on campus. They stopped at their vehicle in the parking lot only long enough to retrieve a bouquet of pink daisies brought to congratulate Stella on her recital performance.

As they waited, Shane, on the lookout for his sister, suddenly raised his hand and pointed. Harold noticed Stella and Dana with their arms wrapped around each other approaching with what appeared to be her parents and sister. The sister moved forward in a wheelchair in front of them as they all quickly headed toward the chapel. What caught Harold's immediate attention was that Stella was laughing loudly without concern for any attention they

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were getting from bystanders. His withdrawn, cautious daughter seemed to have come out of her shell even when it involved being in public with someone in a wheelchair.

After introductions, Stella wanted to show Harold the stained-glass windows in the Little Chapel-in-the-Woods. She held his hand as she led him to the very last panel that portrayed women ministering to human needs through various musical endeavors. At night, the window was lighted by a small spotlight aimed at the intense, deeply colored glass, causing the depicted scene to appear as if it sparkled with diamonds. The tears peeking at the corners of Stella's eyes appeared to sparkle with the same intensity.

"Daddy, this will always be a very special place for me. This is the very spot where I realized that music was a gift that could be shared with others to provide blessings to them, as well as, to myself. That started me thinking about a career in music therapy," Stella shared to a smiling, yet thoughtful Harold. "Now that I've nearly completed my studies, I feel an even greater commitment to be of service to those struggling with disabilities or special needs."

Harold had been so amazed over Stella's awe-inspiring performance in the music recital, but now he was about to explode with parental pride. Stella had found her own strength in music and now showed her determination to share this strength with those who could really benefit from her gift of music.

"Stella, sweetheart, you make me so proud and happy. You are the best daughter anyone could ever hope to have," Harold whispered in Stella's ear.

Stella witnessed the pride that Harold felt by observing his loving gaze toward her. She went on to explain further, "Daddy, you know how much my life changed when I started playing music on my second-hand piano in the sunroom. Thanks to you and Mother, when I learned to express my feelings through music, it changed my whole outlook on life."

Stella glanced over toward Shane and then back at Harold who

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understood the meaning of her glance. He nodded his head in agreement. Music had an epic influence on his heart as well.

“Now that I'm studying the therapeutic approach used in music therapy,” Stella continued, “I have learned that music can transform and heal those with special needs. I feel so grateful that my heart has been healed through music and I want to be able to help heal others as well. I am beginning to understand the role of empathy in my life. By opening up my heart to love others, I can appreciate their precious souls. This really seems to fill my life with amazing blessings.”

Glistening diamond tears sparkled on many of the cheeks of those standing near witnessing Stella express her commitment to music therapy. Shane expressed his own unexpected appreciation for the beautiful, glowing, stained-glass windows by waving his hand through the spotlight beams to create whirling shadows dancing across the stained glass. This Little Chapel-in-the-Woods would be well remembered by the entire Walker family.

Harold hugged Stella tightly for a long time. His hand lovingly stroked her shoulder, touching the soft fabric of her peasant blouse which he had last seen worn by Mony. Stella, reading her father's mind, squeezed his shoulders tightly before she leaned forward and lifted the hem of her skirt just high enough for him to see the turquoise leather, braided daisy- and ivy-embroidered western boots beneath. The tall cowgirl boot shafts still revealed soft, well-oiled new leather attractively conforming to Stella's slender legs. Harold's heart glowed warmly in his chest, and a smile beamed on his face.

The two families decided to go out to celebrate the evening by enjoying barbeque at their favorite Prairie House Restaurant. Shane was intrigued by Darla's skillful wheelchair handling; as she raced ahead of everyone, he, quite unbalanced, skipped along behind her to observe her maneuvers (both quite unconcerned by the stares of onlookers). Harold felt his heart sigh in peace. He and Stella walked arm in arm behind Dana and her parents. Stella talked

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non-stop about her career in music therapy.

During all the conversation at their barbeque feast, Dana and Stella promised each other that they would always stay in touch when they moved on with their lives after graduation. Harold felt satisfied that Mony was looking down on them with a smile on her face. His family was healing and moving forward, finding support from a family with similar circumstances. Darla and Shane sat side by side talking and laughing during their meal, even enjoying apple cobbler and ice cream (without huckleberry sauce) for dessert. Life was getting easier and happier. Later, as Harold and Shane said good night to Stella before they headed back to Sunset Valley, Shane pulled on Stella's arm and without hesitation remarked, "You look pretty, just like Mama."

What a monumental event this had been!



Austin State Hospital  
4110 Guadalupe Street  
Austin, Texas

~June 1, 1994~

Stella was still running nonstop. When she went off to college, she'd been running away from home to start her own individual life. That had changed. She had evolved and was now embracing the community of those with special needs. However, she was still running just as hard as always, she was no longer running to escape something; instead she was running toward the finish line in her attempt to acquire her degree in music therapy. She had not taken a break from her studies since she started.

Her course load was always well above the required hours. Her life had always centered on proving herself intellectually. She was now also eager to learn as much as she could about proven music therapy methods to transform clients who had special needs. In a great state of optimism, she had arrived at the point in her studies where an internship was required. The internship would allow her to direct her energies toward her degree, but also allow her a brief sabbatical from the classroom in order to provide a challenging experience in the real world.

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The Austin State Hospital (ASH) facilities, formerly the old Texas State Lunatic Asylum, resided in the third oldest standing public building in Texas. Located in the lush countryside north of Austin, the hospital, built in 1861, stood as a beacon of hope and tolerance for the treatment of mental illness.

During the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the asylum movement in the United States and Europe reflected the belief that people with mental ailments could regain their sanity in an idealized environment free from the stress of everyday life. Asylums intended to provide a healthy diet, exercise, fresh air, adequate rest, a strict daily routine, social contact, and a kind but firm approach. This humanitarian philosophy replaced earlier Draconian theories that suggested that mental illness stemmed from demonic possession and that prescribed treatments such as flogging and cold water to drive out the demons.

The lunatic asylum offered patients the most modern treatments of the time, including art, music, and recreational therapy. It provided state-of-the-art medical care, such as psychiatric drugs, hydrotherapy, electroconvulsive shock treatment, or on rare occasions, surgical lobotomy.

The asylum functioned as a self-supporting village with artesian wells, gardens, a dairy, an ice factory, and a sewing/tailor shop. Those historic structures were eventually destroyed by fire or demolished to make way for newer buildings. Early residents of Austin's nearby Hyde Park were drawn to the expansive, landscaped asylum grounds, taking carriage rides on the 700 acres of graveled drives and enjoying picnics under the live oak trees and along the banks of lily ponds. Children explored the Japanese-style gardens and paddled small boats to the tiny islands dotting the large lake on the southeastern corner of the property.

While a sense of timelessness pervaded the beautiful fenced grounds, the hospital nonetheless felt the impact of the passing years. So many attendants fell ill or fled with fear during the devastating 1918 influenza epidemic that

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patients had to run the wards. World War II brought personnel and food shortages. Racial integration began in 1958, ending the practice of separating black patients into inferior quarters. The new emphasis on personal freedom championed by the civil rights movement helped fuel the community care movement, eventually emptying the beds of the Austin State Hospital and other institutions.

In 1968, the average daily census comprised 3,313 patients. With decentralization and services transferred to county community health centers around the state, in 1992-93, patients had decreased to 450, and Mental Health Mental Retardation Service (MHMR) centers across the state served 9,000. The ASH mission was “partnering to find solutions toward wellness.”

The population of inpatients whom interns were assigned to ranged in age from infants and children to mature seniors, with diagnoses that included schizophrenia, major depression, Alzheimer’s/dementia, behavior disorder, developmentally disabled, hearing impaired, mental health, physically disabled, and substance abuse. Along with music therapy, other effective therapeutic modalities included recreation therapy, art therapy, dance/movement education, special education programs, and psychiatric substance abuse disorder classes—all with a goal of establishing maximum independence for community living and patient reintegration into community living.

Needless to say, this facility, with all its history, seemed an unusual choice for Stella’s music therapy internship, but it was based entirely on the premise that she could live at home during her six-month competency training. She was yearning to reconnect with her family’s reality in a positive way. She wasn’t, however, expecting any insightful, stunning revelation that might reveal answers to her deep-seated life questions.

During her internship at the Inpatient Psychiatric Unit at ASH, Stella would be supervised by two music therapists with extensive psychiatric music

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therapy experience and professional level music skills. Her internship would begin with an orientation to training and competency and observations of music therapy and other therapeutic disciplines such as art therapy, dance/movement therapy, and recreation therapy. Under guidance of the Internship Director and Clinical Supervisors, Stella would collaborate on, co-lead, and lead sessions as well as provide one-on-one referral services in music therapy.

Stella would be expected to maintain a work schedule similar to the regular staff schedule of the Education/Rehabilitation Department, working from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Stella also was required to work one evening shift and a Saturday shift once a month to mirror the schedule of the Internship Director. She would work within populations of infants, children, preteens, teens, young adults, adults, mature adults, and seniors. Stella felt that having an opportunity to relate her music therapy skills to such a huge community would make or break her budding passion.

Filled with a nervous anticipation about her summer internship duties and her six-month reunion with her family, Stella packed up her bags, including her collection of thoughtfully chosen musical instruments and her beloved Stella Harmony acoustic guitar, once more into her old, roomy, beloved station wagon and headed south back home to Sunset Valley.

Stella's first week as a music therapy intern flew by quickly during her orientation in Adult Psychiatric Services (APS), which included people diagnosed with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression who resided in seven acute units and had an average length stay of 20 days or less. The following week she was orientated in the Specialty Services (SS) unit of adults, who had issues like chronic psychiatric symptoms, geriatrics, deafness/hearing impairments, blindness/visual impairments, developmental disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries. Her last week of orientation centered on her favorite field—child and adolescent psychiatric services (CAPS)—

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which provided treatment and therapy to children diagnosed with mood disorders, psychotic disorders, post-traumatic stress disorders, attention deficit/hyperactive disorders, autism disorders, mental retardation disorders, impulse control disorders, and other behavioral disorders. During all the weeks of orientation, Stella observed under the guidance of the Internship Director and clinical supervisors how music therapy actually was applied to so many various situations within ASH. Soon she was co-leading, collaborating, and even leading group sessions or one-on-one sessions. Stella worked long hours but soon discovered that her tiredness was compensated by such a successful feeling of making a difference by utilizing her musicianship and creativity.

Her first directing assignment was in the CAPS department leading group music therapy sessions with a group of 6- to 8-year-old hyperactive, learning-disabled children under the guidance of Raymond Baldwin, her CAPS adviser, who observed all her music therapy sessions, advised her in moments of indecision, and counseled her during appraisal sessions in his office. Her goal was to engage the children in interactive play and to develop intimacy and cohesion within the group so that they became more adept in interacting with their peers. Her instruments, props, and songs served to encourage and control their actions and feelings. Her goal was to provide a framework for anticipating and planning group interactions and to evaluate individual progress. Her categories for evaluation included four dimensions: interaction, leadership, rule following, and development of feelings of achievement. She compiled histories and participation notes on all the children in her group, which are as follows:

Child #1 (Amy) had attended a special needs preschool and then entered a classroom completely dependent on a special aide in order to complete any assigned class tasks. She had no reading skills and

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an obvious expressive and receptive language disability so severe that auditory aphasia was being considered as a diagnosis. Amy learned visually. She had motor skills disabilities that were apparent as she shuffled around the therapy room.

Child #2 (Danny) had a history of depression and low self-esteem. His interactions showed he had ability and confidence musically.

Child #3 (Mary) was moody and sulked a lot. Because of her lack of boundaries, she felt threatened by others in the group. Her voice was often raised in complaint.

Child #4 (Sam) was dependent and passive and had been encouraged by his parents to be that way. He was medicated with Phenobarbital, which slowed down his physical movements. He was not able to verbalize his feelings, which often led to violent outbursts. He was overweight and lacked physical flexibility.

Child #5 (Steven) came to the group after being hospitalized for depression and suicidal expressions. He was on anti-depression medication. He was very intelligent and quickly was recognized as having the highest academic ability in the group. He read at a level two years above his age group.

Stella had hour-long music therapy sessions with this group three times a week. The music room, though small, contained numerous musical instruments, including an upright piano in the corner. Her adviser Raymond Baldwin was always in attendance at the sessions. He often shared his expertise on issues like managing explosive behaviors and approved of

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Stella's "time-outs" for negative reactions and "class acknowledgment" for positive behavior. Stella was also required to hold individual counseling and family counseling, which were also monitored by her supervisors. Needless to say, Stella was a very, very busy intern.

During group sessions, Stella needed to reorient the children toward group awareness, intimacy, bonding, and cooperation and address problems of ego support and ego defense. The goal was for the children to build trust in each other and to stimulate self-expression, peer acceptance, and self confidence individually.

One day, Stella had her group calmly seated in a circle when Raymond entered the room with his own vintage guitar strapped across his back. Taking a place in the circle, he swung the guitar around to his lap and Stella noticed a well-faded artisan painting of a white dove on the red background of the face of his guitar. Instantly, she recognized the outline of the dove as the same image Mony had drawn for Stella to color so many, many times in the past. Amazed, she found herself smiling and then blushing as she caught herself staring at his guitar.

Reminding herself to get back to her planned session, Stella casually started by singing a song she had improvised that used the children's names in a rhyming chorus. It was intended to identify and acknowledge all the children in the group, but the song ended prematurely when Danny objected to hearing his own name, got up, and left the circle. He simply did not have enough self-confidence to identify with a group. Sam's name brought teasing from the other children about his size. Fear and anxiety spread throughout the entire group as they ran haphazardly throughout the room. Steven raced to Raymond and stood behind him, afraid of the reactions of the rest of the group.

Stella instantly understood that this group was not ready for sharing. Stella carefully coaxed the children back to the circle. Much to her relief,

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Raymond started fingerpicking the “La-Ti-Da” song, a lively, friendly, silly song that Stella instantly recognized as being the first song she had ever heard Marcia Ball play at the Willie Nelson concert so many years earlier. It brought back her own feelings of bouncing joy, which were ideal for encouraging the anxious children to cautiously smile and then even laugh.

When Raymond finished the final verse on his guitar, Stella was ready to take charge of the music therapy session by singing her own song that she had composed at college, “My Billy Bunny.” She moved around the room, smiling as she sang, even though she did not look directly into the face of any of the children, who then seemed to relax and begin to laugh at the silly antics of the bunny in her song. Stella realized that this song did not require interaction, and it gave the group a chance to start to trust her. As she continued to improvise new verses, she handed out paper and colors to the kids, who began to draw their versions of their own make-believe bunny.

After this first session ended, Raymond stayed behind while attendants ushered the children back to a waiting room filled with their parents. Stella apologized for starting the class off badly; she admitted she had lots to learn from her internship. Raymond smiled and reassured her that he had had similar experiences when he first started out just a few years earlier. He was sure she would catch on quickly.

Shyly blushing again, Stella admired the painted dove on his guitar. Grinning easily, he admitted his guitar was a hand-me-down from his father, who had actually taken him (at the tender age of 4) and his mother to the Woodstock Festival in 1969. He wished he could remember more details about Woodstock, but his memories were sketchy at best. One thing he did remember was a puppet theater set up on the free stage to amuse the kids. He remembered lots of nervous amateur singers performing on the free stage. Raymond commented that his hand-me-down guitar seemed to get better with age, and he wouldn't trade it for anything. Stella grinned, nodding her head in

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agreement. She noticed her cheeks felt slightly warm as she identified with her own precious guitar's family history.

Within a few weeks, the children in Stella's music therapy group were no longer avoiding contact but were showing confidence in their participation in the group. Stella planned songs that included rules for taking turns and self control. She introduced creativity by helping the children design their own musical instruments like kazoos, drums, and wind chimes. The children were soon allowed more control and free expression over their choices of music.

Eventually, the children began to use the group session to try out new group behaviors. Some were ready to risk taking a chance at becoming a leader. Even when one child was not able to play by the rules, the whole group would not fall apart. The children wanted others to know them and began to show intimate feelings through their playing of instruments and through their comments to other children. The children were eventually urged to make rules for the group, to be leaders, and to share their ideas with each other. Raymond was well pleased with Stella's initiative and progress with the group.

A favorite activity for the group was Stella's "Boom-Boom" song and dance, which encouraged movement and self expression. The children got to take turns choosing various outrageous hats. Stella played her guitar and created different verses with different moods that the children were allowed to interpret. Each child got his chance at his own verse. Stella, watching the expressions of the child, interpreted the correct music style to accompany each dance. The chorus was always the same "Boom-Boom" and helped refocus the group.

It was apparent to Stella that each child used the song to interpret his or her own feelings. Amy wore a cowboy hat and showed that she could dance backwards. Sam didn't want to take a turn at first, fearing that he might be ridiculed for being fat, but on his second turn, he put on an army hat and

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marched in and out of the circle, which earned a few positive comments from the rest of the group. Danny refused to dance but drummed his own accompaniment throughout the song, bouncing in rhythm to his drum playing. Mary chose to wear the rabbit ears and hop around each child in the group. Steven put on the feathered clown hat and did somersaults in and out of the circle while all the children laughed with him. Each child seemed to discover something new about him or herself and was supported in that expression by the music and the group.

Three months later at the end of her CAPS group, the children enjoyed a number of games that required cooperation, interaction, and skill. Music kept the action going and to bonded the group together while lessening the anxiety some still displayed. The group even created a drama about the song “Old McDonald Had a Farm” which was a highpoint in their cooperation with one another. Each child chose a part and danced the action using props they designed. Even though there were a few arguments about how the farm animals would act out in the play, they were able to negotiate a solution that pleased everyone. Each child was able to try out new behaviors during the play and enjoyed new feelings of self-worth and self-expression.

Stella felt proud of the improvements of the children. She also thoroughly enjoyed the recordkeeping involved with her internship and felt her communication with the parents was very rewarding and offered hope that all the children might improve their individual situations. Her adviser, Raymond, had nothing but good comments on her performance review for his department.

The final month of her internship involved Stella’s participation in another area of Austin State Hospital, the Special Services (SS) unit. As with the CAPS group, Stella observed client sessions for several days with another very experienced supervisor before she was assigned to a case. Her previous success with the children had thoroughly impressed her supervisors, and they

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felt she was ready for the more challenging test of dealing with an older patient's chronic issues. Consequently, Stella observed several such sessions while she provided notes and documentation for patient files.

Days into this training, as Stella sat at a table with her supervisor in the assigned session room, she found herself staring in disbelief as a man who appeared to be about forty entered the room for his music therapy session.

As instructed by her supervisor, Stella had carefully reviewed the current plan of care portion of the patient medical file for Frankie Williams before she observed this session. However, upon seeing Frankie, she immediately reopened the large file covering his entire life at ASH and quickly, yet intensely, searched through additional sections of family history, patient medical history, initial symptoms, and then hastily turned to the form that listed the original diagnosis at birth. Her supervisor, noticing Stella's intense review of the whole medical file, momentarily engaged in pleasant talk with the patient's attendant. Stella sadly noted that Frankie had been given up to the state by his mother at birth on October 12, 1953. Since that time, Frankie had been a ward of the state, living at ASH even in spite of its current decentralization policy. He had only attended educational classes at ASH because of extreme mental retardation.

As Stella cautiously looked up from the medical file, it felt like everything began moving in extreme slow motion. For what seemed like an eternity, Stella stared at an old, faded zigzag scar etched across Frankie's face and at others that lined his arms. One arm was shorter and lacked any muscle tone.

Stella's gaze moved downward studying Frankie's hand, permanently clenched in a relentless, tight fist that he was unable to relax. She could hear and feel him slowly, loudly pounding his grossly misshapen foot in frustration against the leg of the table where they all sat together.

Finally, Stella's disbelieving eyes rested on his tiny, misshapen left eye, which showed hideous deformity and an obvious cataract. She was unable to

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look away. Apparently irritated that Stella seemed to be staring at him, Frankie angrily stood up; his bad eye rolled backwards in its socket as his eyelid pinched shut—thus ending Stella’s slow-motion review.

Frankie hastily stomped with a pronounced, painful limp to the closed door of the session room. He loudly banged his strong arm solidly against the doorframe, letting out an outrageous, animal-like sound and shaking his head in extreme agitation while turning and kicking his strong leg toward the table where Stella sat.

Tripping as he stumbled over his malformed foot, he fell to the floor and rolled himself up into a fetal position. This loud, threatening outburst was just as intensely terrifying to Stella as her first experience of seeing her baby brother, Shane. Thankfully, her supervisors, quite familiar with Frankie’s behavior issues, approached him with soothing voices and eventually coaxed him back into his chair.

By this time Stella, applying all her powers of self control, had composed herself; she became more professionally presentable to Frankie and put a soothing smile on her face. Unseen beneath the tabletop, her own legs trembled in sheer panic.

Instinctively, Stella cautiously reached for the autoharp she had earlier placed on the center of the table. Careful not to reveal her fright to this wild creature seated across the table, she took a long, deep breath and tried to compose herself.

Wanting to express peacefulness and sincerity, she casually started playing a familiar three-chord introduction for the song she had learned from Mony, Shane’s lullaby. She softly hummed like Mony always had, in a low, calm voice with a slow, soothing tempo.

To calm her own anxieties, Stella imagined Mony rocking and humming this lullaby to her baby brother. As Stella tried to channel the feelings of love and compassion that were always in Mony’s heart, the walls of the therapy

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room seemed to fade away. Stella felt surrounded by the warm glow of her mother's love. She could feel passion ignite and arise from within her as if Mony's soul were actually accompanying her. The never-before-heard lyrics for Shane's lullaby rose from deep with Stella's soul. In this moment, as chaos surrounded Frankie, it was as if Mony provided nurturing words to express profound empathy as Stella sang them for the very first time. These lyrics would be forever etched upon Stella's heart.

As you cry out to me dear, darling child,  
I'll kiss all your tears away soon, by and by.  
Feel my devotion now and forever.  
I feel your heartbeat, *I hear your soul sing.*

As I embrace you my dear, darling child,  
Hugs and sweet kisses with my lullabies.  
Together forever, with unending love,  
To me you're so precious, *now hear my soul sing.*

Frankie's breathing eventually slowed. He stopped clinching his eyelids shut and eventually started hugging himself, slowing rocking back and forth in his chair. Stella observed Frankie's bushy dark brows droop downward as tears from both his bad, cataract-covered, tiny, misshapen unseeing eye and his good, handsomely speckled, deep chestnut-brown eye flowed down his puffy cheeks.

Finally, though still weeping, Frankie no longer seemed agitated or showed any more tendency for violence. He leaned forward, resting his forehead on the table. Stella noticed his thick, wavy, dark chocolate hair was

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already showing strands of graying hair from all the stress he must have been exposed to over the course of his life..

Frankie's attendant placed her hand on his back and slowly stroked his tensely bowed back and shoulders. Eventually, she commented that his muscles were beginning to relax. Stella continued singing her lullaby three times in succession, then she immediately progressed to her second song in a slower than normal tempo, "Don't Worry, Be Happy."

The chorus included whistling, which Stella did in a soft, cheerful, carefree sound. She sang all the verses of the song, then started all over again because Frankie finally, slowly lifted his head. There was a soft smile on his face, which reappeared whenever the whistle chorus repeated. Stella picked up the tempo of the song and saw that Frankie smiled again.

Frankie didn't often speak because of his extreme mental retardation and lack of meaningful vocabulary, but his attendant and also Stella's supervisor, both very familiar with Frankie's case, knew that he was more relaxed than he had been in months. He didn't react well to meeting new people, and they had expected him to become quite agitated or even aggressive upon meeting Stella.

In their opinions, this session successfully created a quite favorable impression of Stella's apparently instinctual ability for implementing effective responses and for redirecting hostile emotions of such an agitated, potentially violent patient. Her choice of a soothing lullaby had miraculously calmed this irate, defensive 40-year-old man.

After the session was over, Stella was mentally, physically, and emotionally exhausted, still in shock over the events of the past hour. With her supervisor's approval, she excused herself to a study room in order to write up the results of this eventful music therapy session. There, Stella pored over Frankie's medical file word by word.

Her gaze nervously jumped from section to section throughout the entire

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medical report of Frankie Williams, forward and back, until all the hundreds of puzzle pieces at last fit together. First, she reviewed the list of clinical features of malformations noted at birth: intrauterine growth retardation; skin abnormalities consisting of thickened, hypertrophic cicatrix scar tissue, surrounding skin abnormally indurate, red and inflamed erythema appearing on face, arms, and legs; left side malformed, hypoplastic and abnormally shortened reduction deformities of arm and leg; incomplete development of left hand with fingers clutched; left-side clubfoot; head microcephaly; cataract of left eye; unilateral microphthalmia; inflammation and scarring of eye membranes (chorioretinitis and shorioretinal scarring); and gastrointestinal malformation resulting in difficult, painful digestion.

New developmental medical problems were added at various stages of Frankie's life, including extreme mental retardation, seizures, and hyperactive disorder or possible impulse control disorder. Stella reviewed the entire treatment phase of Frankie's medical problems based primarily on drug treatments that were evaluated as being only slightly effective for his situation. Within the last ten years, Frankie seemed to have only partially benefited from various therapies. His clubfoot, initially treated with surgical techniques, appeared at first to be effectively healing, but over time, it permanently twisted into an unnatural angle, resulting in an obvious limp with significant pain while walking.

Then Stella returned to the familial history of Frankie's medical file. Frankie's mother was herself a runaway juvenile, only 15 years old when she gave birth to Frankie. She was horrified by the birth defects of her new baby boy—even after receiving counseling (as noted in the records)—and because she had no means to even support herself, she immediately gave him up to the care of the state and returned home to her parents.

Authorities placed Frankie under the care of Austin State Hospital, where he had lived his entire life. The history on Frankie's mother revealed that she

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had an isolated, rural upbringing and had no memory of any family medical crisis in her short life prior to Frankie's birth. She had no recollection of anyone in either of her parents' families having any kind of birth defect, let alone any of the symptoms in Frankie's birth. She had been attending her local high school when she discovered she was pregnant. She could not state the actual date of conception.

There were only brief notes on the health background of the mother. The only illnesses she remembered having were what she considered normal because all her close friends also experienced them—whooping cough in first grade, and then, most recently, chickenpox, the silly, spotted rash illness that she and all her girlfriends came down with just a month before she realized that her swollen belly meant she was pregnant.

Stella went on to read the diagnostic conclusion written and signed by attending physicians: Congenital Varicella Syndrome, due to maternal history of having chickenpox virus during her first 20 weeks of pregnancy. Recommendations: Observe and treat wounds and/or developing medical conditions as they present themselves.

As Stella closed Frankie's medical file shut, she reentered that surrealistic world of slow motion. She felt like her body was floating as she slowly crept to the door of the study room. The latch clacked loudly as she locked the door. When she clicked the light switch downward, the room became stuffy, dense, and dark.

Collapsing to the floor, Stella began sobbing the flood of tears she had kept dammed up in her heart her entire life. Her sorrowful teardrops splashed down on the closed file she clenched tightly in her fist. Was she awake or was she in the midst of another night terror? She wasn't completely sure of her immediate reality. Finally, all the tears behind her emotional dam drained away. Her sobbing slowed as she cowered in the room engulfed in empty, black silence.

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Then, thoughts of her mother smiling rays of love down on her, releasing her from all guilt, eventually instilled a calmness and peace that she knew she would feel forever going forward with her life. The room she hid in became brighter and fresher without her touching the switch or turning the lock to open the door. She was able to compose her thoughts. She knew that she had just been given the answer that she had searched for her entire life. Clearly, Frankie and Shane had both suffered identical birth defects as a result of Congenital Varicella Syndrome.

She now knew Shane's birth defects were not genetic and wouldn't affect her future family. Shane's birth defects were also not caused by anything she had done. The real cause of Shane's birth defects was simply the result of an untimely family weekend trip she need not feel any guilt over. Her family just happened to be at the 1974 Willie Nelson 4<sup>th</sup> of July Picnic, and, as a result, they were all exposed to chickenpox.

Eventually, Stella, after smoothing her rumpled clothing and repositioning her tear-dampened hair off her wet cheeks, opened the door and finally escaped from all her demons, feeling forever free. When she got home from work at ASH that day, Stella opened her journal and made a beautiful, prominent entry on the inside back cover. She created carefully hand-drawn sheet music with lyrics for "Hear My Soul Sing," a gift of love and confirmation that she acknowledged as coming from Mony's spirit singing through her own.

Later upon further, intense study of CVS, Stella contacted the National Organization for Rare Disorders and documented that when a woman has a varicella infection (chickenpox) during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy, there is a 2% chance that the baby will have a group of defects called Congenital Varicella Syndrome.

Unruled Composition Book

Stella Harmony Walker

Notes To Self



33



Center For Music Therapy  
Austin, Texas

- Documenting May 7, 1995 -

I'm sitting in the parking lot of the Center For Music Therapy. I've arrive early, eager for my job interview. I pause to lovingly pat the dash of my old Chevy Impala station wagon, which has been my steadfast transportation ever since I left home for college. I consider the idea that if I get this job, I might retire my old station wagon and start off my career with a brand new vehicle.

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I'm anxious to submit my resume and job application in consideration for employment. I've actually stopped by on my way home to Sunset Valley from Texas Woman's University. My college years are over, and I've graduated with high honors, carrying a double major in music education and music therapy. I've even successfully passed board certification exams in music therapy and I'm eager to find employment as a music therapist close to home. I deliberately pause to collect my thoughts before my interview.

I'm aware that one of the questions founder Hope Young is sure to ask is why I chose music therapy as a career. I'll explain how my own family experiences transformed me from guilt and withdrawal to acceptance and empathy—ultimately helping me discover such rich blessings from sharing my own joy, my own “La-Ti-Da” experience, just like my piano-playing inspiration, Marcia Ball.

My college studies and internship have nurtured my understanding that music has tremendous ability to connect people and overcome divisions of fear and guilt while encouraging acceptance and healing. Music therapy is not

just a job choice for me. I truly believe it is a commitment to providing healing opportunities. I've experienced this healing myself, and now, with passion, I strive to offer it to others.

The Center For Music Therapy is growing and currently running an employment opportunity ad in the *Austin American-Statesman* that offers "long-term clinical careers as the center continues to meet the demand for music therapy and its related services." I'm thrilled with the idea of working with clients from diverse outlets like area schools, private programs, and even corporations. Anticipating employment in Austin, I'm also eager to permanently reestablish my family ties to Daddy and Shane.

As I'm given a tour of the Center for Music Therapy, I pause to look in on a young client in a therapy room. Hope Young explains the ongoing session. A beautiful eight-year-old boy named Blake—blind from birth, nonverbal, and with intellectual and motor skills issues—is standing quite stiff, too nervous and unsure to move an inch forward on the slightly angled, self-pacing treadmill. He calls out loudly—

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worried about his sad situation and not trusting enough to take another step. The scene seems to be at a standstill.

Then the clever therapist begins her magic. She leans close to reassure him of her support. I smile as I hear the music therapist begin sweetly, cheerfully singing a lively tune: "One little, two little, three little Indians; four little, five little, six little Indians..."

In less than a minute, the music magically changes the outlook of this adorable child. He relaxes and starts smiling and clapping to the music. By the second verse, the therapist encourages him to take just one step forward, and before long, he starts stepping in unison to the beat of her lively song. I realize that the song is successfully repeated five times, adding up to a hundred steps on the treadmill. It's obvious to me that the delighted boy and his clever musical therapist both feel proud and empowered. I can see the look of trust on Blake's face as he reaches his arms upward to cheerfully hug the neck of his music therapist. I find myself happily anticipating the beginning of my new career.

The interview continues to go very well. Hope Young understands my heartfelt commitment to music therapy. She even shares her own family experience of going to work with her mom at Kansas State School for the Deaf in the 60s where she played with kids who had hearing losses and where she learned some sign language.

Feeling confident as I leave the Center for Music Therapy, I glance at my watch, hoping I won't be late for a date I've planned with Daddy and Shane. We're heading to Texas Memorial Stadium tonight to the Eagles' concert to celebrate my Sunset Valley homecoming with a happy heart and my renewed family commitment to Daddy and Shane.

We drive to the concert in Daddy's new station wagon. Shane has firmly established his permanent position in the front passenger seat. I slide into the back bench seat positioning myself directly behind Daddy. From this vantage point, I can easily observe Shane's facial expressions. I chuckle while recalling my rear-facing, third-row seat in Daddy's first station wagon—now mine. I no longer have any desire to look away from my family out the

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back window. Today, I want to be able to see all of Shane's expressions and be ready to join any conversation.

On our way to the Eagles' concert, Shane glances toward Daddy and inquires about how the Eagles got their name. Daddy loves this conversation because he is, of course, an authority on old music groups. He tells Shane the name of the band was first suggested by Bernie Leadon, one of the band's original members. While on a group outing in the Mojave Desert, Bernie recalled reading about the Hopi Indians' reverence for the eagle.

The name of tonight's concert is the "Hell Freezes Over" concert, so called because of a 1980 quote from Don Henley (one of the original founders and a co-leader of the band). After being asked by a reporter if the band would ever play together again, he replied, "When hell freezes over." Apparently, hell froze over in 1994, because after a fourteen-year break up, the Eagles have reformed their band. Before beginning the tour, they give a live performance for MTV that they release as an album. This second live album by the Eagles, released in 1994, is

currently No. 1 on the *Billboard* charts. The album proves to be as successful as the tour, selling over six million copies. Two of the singles, "Get Over It" and "Love Will Keep Us Alive," make it into the Top 40. This Eagles' tour, which started shortly after the MTV performance, will continue for two years.

This story seems very symbolic to me. Our family shares a similar experience. Looking back, when I left home for college, my original intention was to never, ever live at home again but instead find a career and have my own life separate from my brother. Now, my fervent wish is to get my family back together again.

Texas Memorial Stadium has been notoriously anti-concert after a 1974 Labor Day tear-all by 22 Top when the fans got completely out of control. They actually carved a shape of the state of Texas out of the brand-new AstroTurf from the 40-yard to the 50-yard line. Coach Darrell Royal swore there would never be another concert held in his stadium. Today's Eagles' show is the first concert here since then. The last time I've been to the

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stadium was in April 1982 when Shane competed in the Special Olympics with Mother's help.

Now Daddy, Shane, and I stand together watching the crowds around us and the concert stage below us. Shane stands between Daddy and me. He's a little nervous being in such a big crowd without Sarge, who's faithfully waiting for him at home. The noise level is quite high and this increases Shane's nervousness. However, when the Eagles start playing, the crowd goes quiet, and a big grin appears on Shane's face, which both Daddy and I observe before we glance at each other wearing our own broad smiles. This concert is a reunion for the Eagles, but it's also a reunion for our family on a new level of love, acceptance, and tremendous joy.

My favorite song of the night is "Love Will Keep Us Alive." The lyrics seem to be written just for Shane and me. One line, "The world is changing right before your eyes," seems to clarify our renewed family togetherness. Then the line "I was standing all along against the world outside" reminds me of my own experience of being alone, searching for

answers to my life issues. Another line, "You were searching for a place to hide," fits Shane's life of nonacceptance by the public because of his deformities. Finally together, we now understand and support the song's final line, "Love will keep us alive!"

Daddy and I wrap our arms together behind Shane, and we all sway together throughout the entire song. Glancing over at Daddy again, I see him grinning from ear to ear, and I know, like me, he's thinking about how Mony's final wish for a happy family has become reality. Our family finally feels completely secure together.

At last, there is no further need for me to record "Notes To Self" in this unruled composition journal in order to list my worries over Shane. That mission is completely resolved. For my final notation, I turn one last time to the inside back cover where I've already lovingly inscribed Mother's lyrics to Shane's lullaby, "Hear My Soul Sing." I've decided to embellish them with a sketch of Mother's favorite Woodstock image—a dove.

# Hear My Soul Sing

Shane's Lullaby



Stella Harmony Walker

$\text{♩} = 87$   
B $\flat$

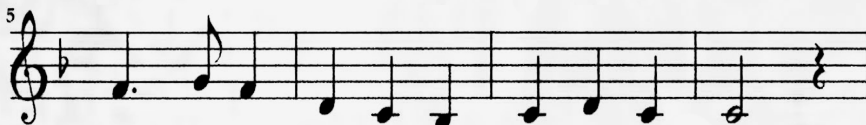
F B $\flat$  F B $\flat$  F



As you cry out to me dear, dar - ling child.  
As I em - brace you my dear, darl - ling child.

B $\flat$

F B $\flat$  F B $\flat$  F



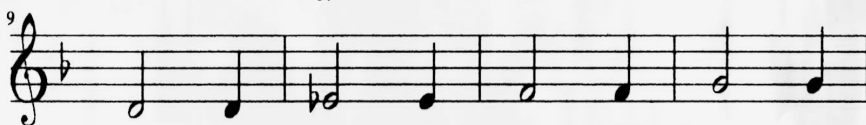
I'll kiss all your tears a - way soon, by and by.  
Hugs and sweet kiss - es with my lul - la - bies.

Dm

Cm

F $\sharp$

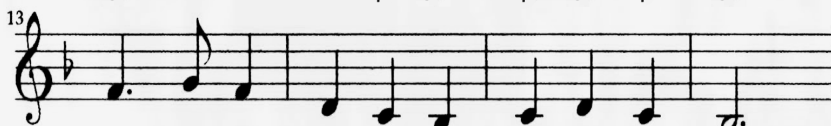
G



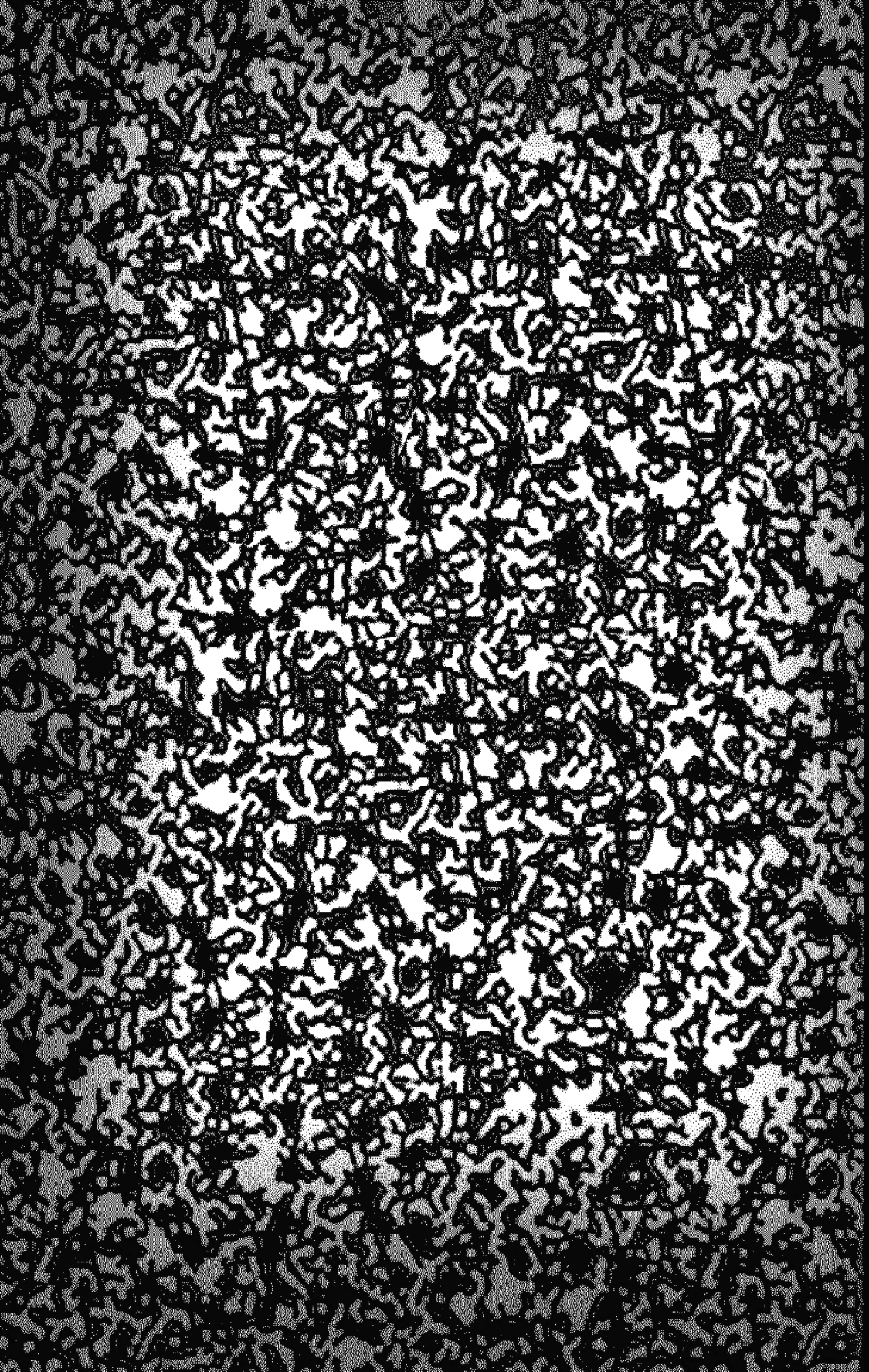
Feel My de - vo - tion now and for - ev - er,  
Togeth - er for - ever with unend - ing love.

B $\flat$

F B $\flat$  F B $\flat$  F B $\flat$



I feel your heart beat. I hear your soul sing.  
To me you're so pre - cious. Now hear my soul sing.



SUNSET VALLEY

CONSERVATION  
RANGERS

Home of Harold and Shane  
Reese Drive  
Sunset Valley, Texas

~May 30, 1996~

What is life like after public school graduation for someone like Shane, who faces obvious intellectual challenges? Harold had pondered this question on and off ever since Stella left for college. His beautiful, brilliant, musically gifted daughter left home for college with such ambition and drive to build her own life. After that, it was just the two of them, father and son. Together, they restructured their relationship without the presence of Stella and Mony. In the beginning, it was tremendously grueling to lay the groundwork of trust. But as time went by, with consistent day-to-day reinforcement, they eventually learned to depend on each other and enjoy spending time together.

After college, Stella had unexpectedly, happily returned home to Sunset Valley with refreshing determination to rebuild a united family structure. Now, once again, more challenges affected their family. Shane had reached the age of 22 and no longer fell into the eligible age requirement for public schooling. School was over for Shane.

As with any schoolchild labeled “significantly mentally retarded” by his

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or her school system, most day-to-day support for learning even basic life skills was dependent upon his or her experiences in classes at school. Shane's environment of people he worked well with was made up of only a few favorite teachers, some (but not all) of the classmates from his special education classes, and his father. Thus, Harold, like parents in similar situations, was perplexed and at a complete loss when anticipating what would happen to Shane once his school days were over. They were obviously entering a new family phase that would once again redefine their family life together.

Shane was not capable of undertaking independent employment unless the job was specifically structured to his minimal intellect and compromised motor skills. He definitely would need constant adult supervision. Harold hoped for a routine that would allow Shane to enjoy new adult experiences but struggled with doubts about what could possibly be arranged for Shane. Above all, Harold wanted Shane to be able to continue to live at home successfully.

In the past, when just Harold and Shane lived at home, they enjoyed working nearly every evening in their backyard garden, which had become a sanctuary to both of them and to Sarge, Shane's companion dog. Harold enjoyed explaining different plants and tools to Shane even though he might have to repeat the discussions many times. Sarge steadfastly stood near Shane wherever he moved throughout the yard. He interrupted Shane from time to time by bringing his ball to play fetch for a few minutes. If Shane started to get angry at any task, Sarge would lean against him or lick his arms to change Shane's focus from anger to pleasure. Sarge cleverly knew how to initiate a diversion which would encourage Shane to calm himself.

Harold was now often able to relax on his observation bench and just observe Shane, with Sarge at his side, picking green beans or squash unassisted. Eventually, Shane learned the skills of how to shop for new plants

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or buy seeds at the nursery. Shane even began advising Harold when he thought the garden needed watering or weeding. Shane earned allowance money based on the completion of tasks, which helped establish his self worth. He was proud when he had his own money to buy his favorite CDs.

Clearly, working in the garden became the central theme of the home life for father and son. They even started mowing and weeding Valley Creek Park across the street from their house on Reese Drive. While they worked there, Harold liked to remember that first family picnic when Mony and he came to show Stella their new home. People in Sunset Valley became accustomed to seeing Harold, Shane, and Sarge volunteering to maintain the park and later other public areas. Harold hoped he could use this starting point to build more skills and responsibility in Shane.

Harold noticed that the Sunset Valley PTA members who had been friends with Mony were often involved in improving the landscaping at Sunset Valley Elementary. Several of them often offered to let Shane (and Sarge) work at their houses doing odd jobs if Harold might occasionally have to work late. He approached the PTA about volunteering weekends to help plant bushes and trees in areas around the school buildings. The PTA members were very receptive—they remembered how much effort Mony had given to the PTA, and they remembered the tremendous loss Harold and Shane suffered when Mony died.

As Shane's graduation grew near, Harold decided to have a talk with his human resources adviser about his state employment pension benefits and see if early retirement was a possible option. There was a tiny idea budding in his mind, but he wanted to check out all his options carefully. Harold's idea burst into full bloom when he realized that he was indeed eligible for early retirement from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. He was told that he was already vested in his retirement plan because he had worked over 26 years and was 54 years old. (The state employment plan formula was that

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years of service plus actual age must be equal to or greater than 80.) He actually qualified for both early retirement and continuing health insurance benefits.

On the day of Shane's high school graduation, Harold and Stella could see that when Shane put on his cap and gown for the ceremony, he displayed a high level of pride and accomplishment. Though still limping as he walked in the line of graduates, they could sense Shane's confidence when he crossed the stage to shake the hand of the school principal and accept his diploma. He graduated even though his disabilities were still severe and would remain so the rest of his life. It was now up to Harold to figure out a continuing plan for Shane's adult life.

Harold's cleverly designed plan for their future began to take shape—father and son would simply continue their gardening/landscaping skills together full time. The Walkers would start up their own company, the Sunset Valley Gardening Crew.

The plan was an amazing success. Harold, now retired from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and Shane (with Sarge at his side) worked landscaping or gardening jobs in their community. Shane proved an eager worker, curious to learn all he could about the gardening business, and Harold was dedicated to providing the very best landscaping services. Shane specialized in raking leavings, cleaning tools, or watering bushes. He was quite proud of their landscaping jobs and would comment whenever riding through the area with Harold. He often asked Harold if they could take photos of plants when they were in bloom. Harold sensed that this work would be a stable foundation for his son. Both gardening and music had been what calmed Harold's grief when Mony had died. He could easily see that he and Shane had very much in common.

Mony was evidently still watching out for Shane from above. A few days after graduation, three of the members of the PTA landscaping committee

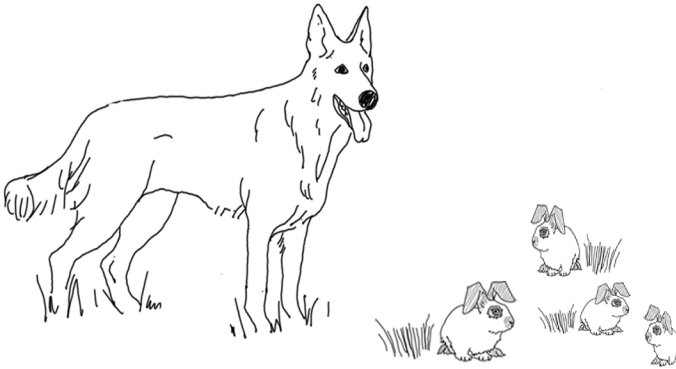
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approached Harold with a proposition to contract Sunset Valley Gardening Crew for landscaping services at Sunset Valley ISD. They understood about Shane's relationship with Sarge and approved the use of his companion dog on school grounds while Harold and Shane worked. The committee knew that with Sarge at his side, Shane was receptive to all requests and was very productive. They realized that they could help build a good career for Shane's continued well-being after graduation.

This whole situation worked for everyone involved. As time went by, many Sunset Valley residents observed Harold and Shane working throughout the community. Eventually, it was common for the phone to ring at Harold's house every evening with people requesting help from the Sunset Valley Gardening Crew and making sure that Shane and Sarge were included. Their business grew rapidly. The best part of the business for Harold was working side by side with his son. They also stayed actively involved with volunteering.

Out of the 683 acres of land that made up Sunset valley, 200 of them were devoted to green space. Residents there put extremely high value in conserving and protecting their natural resources. In 1996, the community created a volunteer team to maintain their green space. Harold needn't have worried about continuously cultivating Shane's life passion because it was destined that Shane would become a dedicated, lifelong Sunset Valley Conservation Ranger. The job description read, "Rangers help monitor the special needs of Sunset Valley green space and trails acreage by monitoring, documenting, and reporting to public works. In addition to constant informal patrolling, they will hold periodic cleanups of the trails, open spaces, and creeks that run through them." Both Shane and Sarge became well known, frequently observed, and respected volunteers walking the trails, each with their own Conservation Ranger badge displayed for all to see.

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Home of Harold, Shane, Sarge, Stella and Raymond  
Reese Drive  
Sunset Valley, TX

January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000

The first morning of the turn of the century is sunny and clear with a soft, refreshing, intermittent breeze. Stella and Raymond sit meditating together on the well-worn observation bench. Its faded images of doves and daisies still remind Stella of the day she and Mother decorated her bench together.

Stella smiles as she revisits her pleasant memory and reaches to smooth her maternity blouse over her round, bulging belly, which has been rapidly expanding these last few weeks as the birth of her first child approaches. Her husband of less than a year, Raymond Baldwin, has just finished reading Stella's handwritten "Notes To Self" unruled composition book that recalls her memories about the deep darkness she fell into when Shane was born with such horrifying birth defects. Stella wanted Raymond to read it before she packs it away forever, a part of the past that has absolutely no power to hurt her ever again. Stella's guilt is gone; her night terrors no longer plague her.

Raymond lovingly looks into Stella's deep hazel-green eyes shaded by her dark, thick lashes and observes that the intense hidden pain he read about in

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her journal is no longer reflected. In this moment of pure bliss, Stella leans toward Raymond. Tenderly bringing his hand close to her face, she kisses his wedding band, which like her own is engraved with the words “Hear My Soul Sing.”

Then, reaching for his own hand-me-down guitar with the iconic, hippie-painted Woodstock dove on its faded red face, Raymond serenades her with “I Wanna Hold Your Hand” (a song he remembers from Woodstock, where he, a spunky four-year-old, freckled, sunburned kid hanging out at the free stage with other kids, saw it performed by an ex-sailor in dungarees who, when he finished the song, saluted the crowd). Stella blushes now just as Mony had when Harold sang it.

Shane, now 25 and very content at heart, stands next to the old rabbit hutch where he's just repositioned the pink flamingos he and Harold purchased together on an adventure years ago. It's their annual New Year's custom to move the flamingos to a new spot in the yard. This year, the flamingos are positioned as if they are looking into the hutch, which once again is occupied by rabbits—not just one—but a mother rabbit and her litter of three floppy-eared bunnies. Harold, while hoeing winter weeds from the garden, had found the wild rabbit's nest and moved it to the rabbit hutch to protect the litter. The rabbits are now quite tame due to Shane's frequent offerings of salad greens from the refrigerator. Now, Shane softly tickles one of the baby bunnies with his left index finger and thumb, as he's grown quite accustomed to doing.

Stella picks up her own namesake acoustic guitar, and, although it's difficult to hold due to her bulging belly, she plays background chords as Raymond fingerpicks their favorite family song. Sarge, chomping on a ball clinched in his mouth, leaps alongside Shane, who's cheerfully whistling the chorus after singing his favorite words, “Don't worry, be happy.”

Sarge wants to initiate a lively game of fetch with Shane, who happily

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starts their routine—an endless game that lasts until they both fall to the ground exhausted and out of breath. Sarge is still Shane’s constant companion and constant support for his now infrequent frustrations and even less frequent seizures. Shane realizes with intense pride that Sarge is filled with more joy and enthusiasm for him than for anyone else.

Stella has only pleasant thoughts about her baby’s approaching arrival. She and Raymond are confident that together they are ready to nurture their child. Stella positively knows their child will not be born with Congenital Varicella Syndrome like Shane. The medical case she witnessed during her internship at ASH resolved that fear. Shane’s CVS was due to Mony having chickenpox in the first twenty weeks of pregnancy. This syndrome no longer holds any threat over Stella’s head. It isn’t passed genetically. Stella is optimistic about her family’s future.

Stella hasn’t forgotten Frankie, now nearly 50 and still living at ASH, and she continues to donate many hours of music therapy for his well being. The entire family, including Sarge, frequently visit Frankie. Their ongoing friendship mutually benefits them all.

This pleasant morning, Harold fondly remembers happy memories as he putters in their garden planting extra rows of lettuce for the rabbits. His Austin Planting Guide indicates January is also a good month to plant strawberries. He’s going to start some pink daisies from seed in flats he’ll put in the window of the sunroom. In a few months, he’ll transplant the seedlings to create Mony’s usual pink daisy garden border. Pausing to stand up and stretch his back, aching from being bent over too long, Harold looks across the back yard as if to inventory his happy family. Harold grins as he notices his ever-thoughtful son-in-law gently patting Stella’s big baby belly while she contentedly gazes across the yard toward inseparable Shane and Sarge.

Harold, looking more youthful than ever, reaches up to caress the well worn, smooth Happy Buddha beads still always on his neck. Just then a cool

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fresh breeze delicately caresses his cheek before flowing on to lightly strum the nearby wind chimes—as if Mony, in approval, is playing the delicate, opening chord of “Hear My Soul Sing, Shane’s Lullaby.” Seconds later, these same comforting wind chime notes reach Shane, casually stretched out on the well-groomed lawn next to Sarge who protectively lays his paw over Shane’s side while eagerly licking and tickling Shane’s neck.

Inspired by both the musical chord of Mony’s wind chimes and the loving affection of Sarge, Shane joyfully shouts out, “EVERYBODY LISTEN! I know everyone loves me as much as Mama! Even Sarge!”

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THE END

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## ***How the Writing of This Book Evolved***

This novel is a work of historical fiction. The fictional characters and fictional scenes within the story blend among actual historical locations, events, and real people in order to create a true-to-life story that embraces authentic, well-researched social issues.

Several references on the topic of sibling issues were extensively researched in order to accurately corroborate the fictional content of the novel with the most accurate, researched details available. Those references, recommended for reader research, are as follows:

Hames, Annette, and McCaffry, Monica. *Special Brothers and Sisters: Stories and Tips for Siblings of Children with Special Needs, Disability or Serious Illness*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2005.

Safer, Jeanne. *The Normal One: Life With a Difficult or Damaged Sibling*. Free Press, 2007.

Strohm, Kate. *Siblings: Brothers and Sisters of Children with Special Needs: Stories of Everyday Life with Children Who Are Different*. David Fulton Publishers, 2014.

This section is meant to provide documented resources for each chapter in order to provide credibility and additional information for those especially interested in these topics. In some chapters, the descriptions of events, characters, or locations are enhanced for the purpose of the story, though I remain careful not to oppose the actual historical record. These notes are provided at the conclusion of the novel in order not to detract from the flow of the story and are logistically presented in an orderly collection by chapter reference.

Music is a vital component of the story, and references are given to all songs utilized in the novel, with notes on composers and lyrics as they apply to the story mood and inspiration. Online video references are provided so that the reader can actually listen to song performances that are depicted in the story. Sketches are provided to add visual details to topics.

## Chapter 1

**Nightmare symptoms**, documented causes, stages, demographics, symptoms and diagnosis are detailed in the online resource:

*Encyclopedia of Children's Health*

<http://www.healthofchildren.com/N-O/Nightmares.html>

**Baby Brother Tender Love** is a reference to the 1972 Mattel Baby Brother Tender love doll, 12" tall, white or black doll, anatomically correct doll, marked with a date 1972 on neck and body is pictured on the online resource:

*Mattel Dolls 1970s*

[http://dollreference.com/mattel\\_dolls1970s.html](http://dollreference.com/mattel_dolls1970s.html)

**"Bridge over Troubled Water"** is the fifth and final studio album by American folk rock duo Simon & Garfunkel, released in January 1970 on Columbia Records. The song won five awards at the Thirteen Annual Grammy Awards in 1971, including Grammy Award for Record of the Year and Song of the Year. The song became Simon & Garfunkel's biggest hit single, often considered their signature song. It was a number one hit on the Billboard Hot 100, eventually selling over six million copies worldwide. It became one of the most performed songs of the 20th century. Detailed Information found at the online source:

*Bridge over Troubled Water (song) - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bridge\\_over\\_Troubled\\_Water\\_\(song\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bridge_over_Troubled_Water_(song))

A video of this song can be found on following online source:

*Simon and Garfunkel – Bridge Over Troubled Water - YouTube*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H\\_a46WJ1viA.html](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_a46WJ1viA.html)

## Chapter 2

**A Stella Harmony H929 Acoustic Guitar** manufactured in 1969 cost \$37.50. The Stella Harmony is still popular and available today. See information and photos at the following online sources:

*Stella H927 Guitar - Made by Harmony - Harmony Database*

<http://harmony.demont.net/model/237.html>

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*Antebellum Instruments: c.1960 Harmony-Made 'Stella' H929  
Guitar*

<http://antebelluminstruments.blogspot.com/2012/04/c1960-harmony-made-stella-h929-guitar.html>

To see and hear the new acoustic guitar Harold purchased on his way to Woodstock, watch the online YouTube video referenced below:

*Vintage STELLA Acoustic Demo - Harmony Parlor Guitar - YouTube*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jfD\\_KqejDIo.html](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jfD_KqejDIo.html)

**Dungarees** were the junior enlisted (E1-E-6) working uniform worn from 1913 through the 1990s. Dungarees consisted of a short or long-sleeve blue chambray shirt, white T-shirt, and boot-cut denim jeans (the jeans in question had heptagonal "patch" pockets sewn on the front of the pant-legs rather than the traditional "slash" pockets often seen on civilian-worn jeans). Head gear was the white "dixie cup" cover for men and an early form of the black garrison cap or a black beret for women; after graduation from boot camp, the command ball cap was optional (and in practice more common). Starting in 1995, the white hat was no longer authorized for wear with dungarees, and the command (or Navy) ball cap became the predominant cover. During cold weather a black watch cap was allowed.

The sailor's last name was stenciled in white on the pants just above the back pocket on the right side. The name was also affixed in black on the shirt just above the right breast pocket. Names could be reinforced with embroidered thread of the appropriate color. Rate badges (for petty officers) and warfare devices were "iron on." The rate badges consisted of the eagle and chevrons only, and lacked the rating device.

Low black leather boots called "boondockers" were issued with the dungaree uniform, however, sailors assigned to Damage Control Division or certain specific duties were sometimes allowed to wear black leather jump boots. Flight deck personnel were issued a type of taller cap-toe boot similar in design to jump boots known colloquially as "wing walkers". These types of boots had zig-zag patterned out-soles to avoid gathering FOD (Foreign Object Debris) between the ridges that could litter the flight deck and cause potential damage to aircraft. "Dealer/Chelsea" style ankle boots (known colloquially as Lox boots) with elastic-sides were issued to personnel working with Liquid oxygen for easier removal in case the boots would freeze upon contact. More interesting details can be found at the following online source:

*Uniforms of the United States Navy - Wikipedia, the Free  
Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uniforms\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uniforms_of_the_United_States_Navy)

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**USS Essex**, aircraft carrier moored at Boston Naval Yard online details can be found at the following online sources:

*USS Essex (CV-9) - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_Essex\\_\(CV-9\).html](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Essex_(CV-9).html)

*USS Essex (CV 9) - USS Essex*  
<http://www.navysite.de/cv/cv9.html>

**Apollo 11 astronauts** walking on moon in 1969 was the most monumental news ever heard in history. Harold heard this news as he is hitchhiking to Woodstock. For online details, see:

*July 20, 1969: One Giant Leap For Mankind | NASA*  
[http://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/apollo/apollo11.html](http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/apollo/apollo11.html)

**Woodstock Music Festival** details including Max Yasgur's 600 acre dairy farm, poster of a white dove perched on a guitar neck, Richie Haven's "Freedom" song onstage at Woodstock, LSD consumed at the festival, conditions at site, Dr. William Abruzzi comments to Rolling Stone magazine, free stage set up for anyone to perform on, Joan Baez only major act to play on Woodstock's free stage, performers and their songs performed, description of the stage and loudspeakers and skinny dipping in the pond were derived from the following 480 page paperback resource:

Spitz, Bob. *Barefoot in Babylon: The Creation of the Woodstock Music Festival*, 1969. Plume, 2014.

**Falcetti Music Store**, Springfield, Ma. Online details can be found at the following online source:

*Tony Falcetti | Oral Histories | NAMM.org*  
<https://www.namm.org/library/oral-history/tony-falcetti>.

**Hog Farm Commune** from California at Woodstock history and interesting details can be found at the following online source:

*Hog Farm - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hog\\_Farm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hog_Farm)

**"I Wanna Hold Your Hand"** (the song Harold sang at the Woodstock free stage) had actually been intended for release in the U.S. in mid-January 1964, coinciding with the planned appearance of the Beatles on The Ed Sullivan

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Show but it was released two weeks ahead of schedule on 26 December. The demand was insatiable; in the first three days alone, a quarter million copies had already been sold (10,000 copies in New York City every hour). Capitol was so overloaded by the demand, it contracted part of the job of pressing copies off to Columbia Records and RCA. By 18 January, the song had started its fifteen-week chart run, and on 1 February, the Beatles finally achieved their first number-one in America. More interesting details about this song and lyrics can be found at the following online source:

*The Beatles - I Want To Hold Your Hand - Fantastic LIVE Version!!!! - YouTube*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46\\_yYR6tGOI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46_yYR6tGOI)

*I Want to Hold Your Hand - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I\\_Want\\_to\\_Hold\\_Your\\_Hand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Want_to_Hold_Your_Hand)

**“Blowin In The Wind”** is a single written by Bob Dylan in 1962 which sold a phenomenal three hundred thousand copies in the first week of release and made the song world famous. On August 17, 1963, it reached number two on the Billboard pop chart, with sales exceeding one million copies. It has been described as a protest song it poses a series of rhetorical questions about peace, war and freedom. The refrain is "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind". These details and more can be found at the following online source:

*Blowin' in the Wind - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blowin%27\\_in\\_the\\_Wind](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blowin%27_in_the_Wind)

The song can be heard with lyric notes at:

*Blowin' In The Wind Lyrics (Bob Dylan) – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watchv=RsjjSfAmEeo&list=RDRsjjSfAmEeo#t=56>

**“Mony, Mony”** is a 1968 single by American pop/rock band Tommy James and the Shondells. It reached No. 1 in the UK, and No. 3 in the USA. Harold likes the song because the lyrics express “You make me feel so good, so fine, Mony, Mony”. Mony agrees with the refrain, “Yeah, Yeah! These details and more can be found at the following online source:

*Mony Mony - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mony\\_Mony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mony_Mony)

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The song and lyrics are available on this online source:

*Billy Idol - Mony Mony (Lyrics) – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E97CmNK3NtU>

### Chapter 3

**Texas International Pop Festival**, at the site of the Dallas International Motor Speedway, is detailed at this online site:

*TEXAS INTERNATIONAL POP FESTIVAL, 1969 | The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*  
<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/xft01>

**Shiva's Head Band**, created by Spencer Perskin and his wife Susan were the house band at the Vulcan Gas Company, Austin, Texas and later opened a music hall called the Armadillo World Headquarters. The band played at the Texas International Pop Festival. Details and history can be found at this online site:

*Shiva's Headband Official Web Site*  
<http://www.shivasheadband.com>

**Lucky, the roadie**, is a purely fictional character connected to the Shiva's Head Band who is responsible for suggesting to Harold and Mony that they successfully relocate in Austin, Texas.

**Wavy Gravy** is the noted Hog Farm leader and peace activist. He attends the vows of Harold and Mony in a fictional sense. Online details are available here:

*Wavy's Biography*  
<http://www.wavygravy.net/bio/biography.html>

**“On the Road Again”** is a song by Canned Heat and was the first record chart hit and one of their best-known songs. It features harmonic and guitar solos which take up 2 minutes of the total 7 minutes. Online details are available on the following online source:

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*On the Road Again (Canned Heat Song) - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On\\_the\\_Road\\_Again\\_\(Canned\\_Heat\\_song\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Road_Again_(Canned_Heat_song))

A video featuring “On the Road Again” from the 1969 Woodstock Festival is located at this online site:

*Canned Heat On the Road Again Live 1969 – YouTube*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsA8YlmGGEc>

**Happy Buddha Beads** are given by Harold to Mony on the occasion of their wedding vows. Harold has little money to purchase a wedding ring so he uses this good luck symbol for their future. According to legend, if one rubs the Laughing Buddha's great belly, it brings forth wealth, good luck, and prosperity. Details can be found on the following online source:

*Laughing Buddha – ReligionFacts*

<http://www.religionfacts.com/laughing-buddha>

**“I Got You Babe”** is a pop song by the duo Sonny & Cher featured by Billboard and Rolling Stone magazine as one of the greatest duets of all time. In the U.S., the song sold more than 1 million copies in 1965. Sonny Bono wrote the song for himself and his wife late at night in their basement. More details can be found on the following online source:

*I Got You Babe - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I\\_Got\\_You\\_Babe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Got_You_Babe)

The actual 1965 version of “I Got You Babe” can be heard on the following online source:

*I Got You Babe - Sonny and Cher Top of the Pops 1965 – YouTube*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BERd61bDY7k>

**“Georgia On My Mind”** was sung by Harold as he and Mony rode to Austin. Harold substitutes Mony's name for “Georgia” in the lyrics. The song written in 1930 by Hoagy Carmichael and Stuart Gorrell. It is asserted that the lyrics were written not about the state of Georgia, but rather for Carmichael's sister, Georgia Carmichael. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

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*Georgia on My Mind - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia\\_on\\_My\\_Mind](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_on_My_Mind)

“George On My Mind” can be heard at this online site:

*Georgia on My Mind- Ray Charles – YouTube*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Thls\\_tMuFkc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Thls_tMuFkc)

#### **Chapter 4:**

**Armadillo World Headquarters** is a real Austin Concert Hall established in 1969. Fictional character, Harold Walker, finds a job there after he and Mony move to Austin. Thousands of artists played at the Armadillo between 1970 and 1980, many of whom built their careers by being heard there. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Armadillo World HQ – Threadgills*  
<http://www.threadgills.com/armadillo-world-hq>

**Viva Les Amis Cafe** opened on May 7, 1970 at 24th street and Nueces – one block from the University of Texas. Details can be found at the following online source:

*Viva Les Amis*  
<http://www.vivalesamis.com/history.aspx>

**“I’ll Be Your Baby Tonight”** was the first track of Gliding Bird, first album by Emmylou Harris released in 1969. Details can be found on the following online source:

*Emmylou Harris - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emmylou\\_Harris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emmylou_Harris)

This song can be heard on the following online source:

*Emmylou Harris ‘Ill Be Your Baby Tonight’. - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilpWRJbZttw>

**Chambers Courts HUD Project** was completed in 1939, and is located less than one mile east of downtown Austin. The project contains 158 one to four bedroom apartments in thirty, one and two story concrete buildings. The buildings have concrete floors and ceilings and masonry interior walls. The

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apartments have very little storage space, small kitchens and bathrooms. Electrical systems are under capacity. Given the concrete and masonry construction of the buildings, the apartments retain heat during the summer and residents find the electric systems cannot reliably support the current necessary to operate a window air conditioner, making Austin summers unbearable for the residents. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*The Physical Problems Facing Public Housing*  
<http://www.texashousing.org/phdebate/problem3.html>

**“God Only Knows”** is a song written by Brian Wilson and Tony Asher for American rock band The Beach Boys, released in 1966. The recording was produced and arranged by Wilson using many unorthodox instruments, including French horn, accordions, and a quartet of violas and cellos heard throughout the piece in counterpoint. More details and a site for listening are found at the following online resources:

*God Only Knows - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God\\_Only\\_Knows](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_Only_Knows)

*The Beach Boys - God Only Knows (Lyrics via Description) (HQ) – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkPy18xWlj8>

## Chapter 5:

**Town Lake, Austin, Texas** and its shoreline had become neglected by the 1970's, polluted and overgrown with weeds. KTBC referred to the lake as an "eyesore." During his two terms in office (1971–1975), the Mayor of Austin Roy Butler partnered with former United States First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson to establish the Town Lake Beautification Committee with the purpose of transforming the Town Lake area into a usable recreation area. A system of hike and bike trails was built along the shoreline of the lake in the 1970s, establishing (what was then known as) Town Lake as a major recreational attraction for the city of Austin. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Lady Bird Lake - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady\\_Bird\\_Lake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady_Bird_Lake)

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**“Can’t Take My Eyes Off You”** is a 1967 single by Frankie Valli and the 4 Seasons. The Valli version was also used by NASA as a wake-up song for a mission of the Space Shuttle, on the anniversary of astronaut Christopher Ferguson. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Can’t Take My Eyes Off You - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Can%27t\\_Take\\_My\\_Eyes\\_Off\\_You](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Can%27t_Take_My_Eyes_Off_You)

The single, “Can’t Take My Eyes Off You” can be heard at the following online source:

*Can't Take My Eyes off You - Frankie Valli and The 4 Seasons – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGFToiLtXro>

**Congress Avenue Bridge** above Town Lake, today known as the Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge, crosses over Lady Bird Lake in Austin, Texas. Before construction of the Longhorn Dam was completed in 1960, the bridge crossed the Colorado River from which Lady Bird Lake is impounded. The bridge was known as the Congress Avenue Bridge from the construction of the first span across the Colorado River at that location in the late 19th century until November 16, 2006, when the Austin City Council renamed the current bridge in honor of Ann W. Richards, the 45th Governor of Texas and a long-term resident of Austin. The bridge is a concrete arch bridge with three southbound and three northbound vehicle lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the bridge. See information at the following online source:

*Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ann\\_W.\\_Richards\\_Congress\\_Avenue\\_Bridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ann_W._Richards_Congress_Avenue_Bridge)

**Schwinn Deluxe Tornado Bicycle** is listed in the 1960 Schwinn catalog as fully equipped red and ivory. The catalog describes the 26” bike as being an outstanding value, and having coaster brakes and only priced for \$49.95. This was a feature packed Schwinn at a low price. Includes tank, horn, headlight, truss rods, carrier. For detailed illustration and information see the following online source:

*1960 Schwinn Catalog*  
<http://schwinncruisers.com/catalogs/1960.html>

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### Chapter 6

**Zilker Kite Festival** is for everyone. Started in 1929, the Zilker Kite Festival is an annual Austin event and celebrates the beauty of the homemade kite. Each year there are thousands of kites flying in the sky, making for an incredible view. There are plenty of other activities throughout the day, such as face painting, games, contests, rock wall climbing, and plenty of tasty food. There is a field kite workshop at the festival. All of the materials are provided to make a kite and it is guaranteed to fly. There is a mass ascension, when all the kites in the park go up together. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Zilker Kite Festival - Visitor Information*

<http://austin.about.com/od/annualevents/p/ZilkerKiteFest.htm>

**“Happy Together”** is a 1967 song from The Turtles' album of the same name. The song knocked The Beatles' "Penny Lane" out of the number one slot for three weeks on the Billboard Hot 100. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Happy Together (song) - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Happy\\_Together\\_\(song\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Happy_Together_(song))

To listen to the song go to the following online source:

*The Turtles - Happy Together - 1967 – YouTube*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRCe5L1imxg>

### Chapter 7

The **1964 Chevy Impala** station wagon was introduced to the novel when the author discovered Cardiff Classics Auction site. There was listed VIN #: 41845J297814, a rare long roof station wagon, used condition, 409 V-8, 340 Horsepower, automatic “power glide” transmission, mileage 89,512, rear wheel drive, tan exterior with blue leatherette interior color, electric windows, power steering, air conditioning, rear-facing 3<sup>rd</sup> row seating, dual side mirrors, power rear window, factory tachometer, factory AM/FM radio, factory roof rack, tilt steering wheel, and factory chrome double reverse wheels.

In the story, Harold purchases a 1964 used station wagon when he had acquired a job with good pay and benefits and his family was doing much better financially. They are able to go places without relying on the city buses

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or the bicycle loaned to them by Lucky. Stella was especially fond of riding in the 3<sup>rd</sup> row rear facing seat. More details and pictures of this year and model station wagon were found at this online source:

*1964 Used Chevrolet Impala 409 Station Wagon at Cardiff Classics  
Serving Encinitas, IID 3396094*  
[http://cardiff-classics.ebizautos.com/detail-1964-chevrolet-impala\\_409-station\\_wagon-used-3396094.html](http://cardiff-classics.ebizautos.com/detail-1964-chevrolet-impala_409-station_wagon-used-3396094.html)

**Barton Springs Pool** is a man-made recreational swimming pool located on the grounds of Zilker Park in Austin, Texas. The pool exists in the channel of Barton Creek and is filled by water from Main Barton Spring, the fourth largest spring in Texas. The pool is a popular venue for year-round swimming, as its temperature maintains a narrow range about 68°F.

Long before Barton Springs Pool was built, the springs were considered sacred and were used for purification rituals by the Tonkawa Native American tribe who inhabited the area. The pool is surrounded by grassy slopes, ideal for sunbathing.

An environmental issue involving the springs and the pool emerged with the discovery of the Barton Springs salamander, a federally listed endangered or threatened species which only exists in the pool and a few surrounding environs. After some debate, and studies by the city of Austin, Texas state agencies, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it was determined that swimmers and salamanders could co-exist (as they had probably been doing for some time). This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Barton Springs Pool - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barton\\_Springs\\_Pool](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barton_Springs_Pool)

**Zilker Playscape** is another attraction of Zilker Park. There you can play on the large multi-age playscape, hike and bike trails and large full-service picnic areas. Multiple other attractions include: Zilker Botanical Gardens including the Taniguchi Oriental Garden and the Austin Area Garden Center, Austin Nature and Science Center, Zilker Hillside Theatre, and Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum on the south end of the park which is the home of a collection of works by sculptor Charles Umlauf. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Zilker Metropolitan Park | Parks and Recreation | AustinTexas.gov -  
The Official Website of the City of Austin*  
<http://austintexas.gov/departments/zilker-metropolitan-park>

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### Chapter 8:

**Sunset Valley, Tx.** Two brothers, M.H. and Clarence Flournoy purchased a large tract of the pasture type land in the early 50's to develop as a subdivision. M.H. Flournoy's son, Malcolm, who lives on Reese Drive said that his father and uncle were called crazy by their friends because the area was so far out from Austin! Sunset Valley was located about seven miles southwest of the State Capitol building in Austin.

The slogan for the city is, "Sunset Valley, where yards are wide, roadways are narrow, people are few and rural life is cherished." On September 17, 1954, the area referred to as Sunset Valley consisting of less than two square miles of land area and inhabited by more than two hundred people was officially incorporated.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of Austin, Sunset Valley remains a place of quiet beauty, where acres of conservation land protect native plants and provide a home for hummingbirds, owls, foxes, armadillos, possum, deer, and coyotes. And where the stars still shine at night because we care enough to protect the night sky from light pollution.

The name, Sunset Valley, was based on the area's topography and location. The entire area was a tree filled valley surrounded by gently rolling hills located on the western edge of Austin where it was closest to the sunset. The name, Sunset Valley seemed to be a natural choice.

Valley Creek Park (1.43 acres) was donated in 1973 by Clyde Copus, of Nash-Phillips-Copus. This land is used to be the picnic grove for the Flournoy family years ago. Now it is equipped with picnic tables and play structures for the children. More details, including details about Reese Drive homes and families can be found at the following online source which has a link to an informal history of Sunset Valley Texas, 1954-2004.

*City History - Sunset Valley*

[http://www.sunsetvalley.org/index.asp?Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC=%7B2D89AFF2-E41F-4E3B-A0C3-0C3334D02AAE%7D](http://www.sunsetvalley.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7B2D89AFF2-E41F-4E3B-A0C3-0C3334D02AAE%7D)

**"Let Me Wrap You In Warm and Tender Love"** written in 1966 by Percy Sledge whose soulful voice was perfect for soul ballads. Through the mid-1960s, he toured the Southeast with the Esquires Combo on weekends, while working at Colbert County hospital during the week as an orderly. "When a Man Loves a Woman" is a song recorded by Percy Sledge in 1966 at Norala Sound Studio in Sheffield, Alabama. It made number one on both the Billboard Hot 100 and R&B singles charts. It was listed 54th in the List of Rolling Stone magazine's 500 greatest songs of all time. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

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*Percy Sledge - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy\\_Sledge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy_Sledge)

To listen to the songs go to the following online source:

*Percy Sledge — Warm & TenderLove - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyLOxLI-N7I>

*Percy Sledge - When a Man Loves a Woman (1966) - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lp7FtJXp7k>

**Mattel's Baby Brother Tender Love** has an all soft vinyl stuffed body with rooted blonde hair and painted brown eyes. The unique feature of this doll is that he is an anatomically correct male. I remember that this was quite a controversial feature back in the early 70s. This is a rarity in the doll world as very few dolls are made this way. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Mattel Baby Tender Love Line*  
<http://www.dollinfo.com/mbtendlv.htm>

## Chapter 9

**Willie Nelson Fourth of July Concert** at College Station, Texas in 1974 included interesting incidences such as the hot air balloon rides, fireworks which caused a fire in the parking lot and topless women attendees sitting on their companions shoulders as they stood near the stage of performers.

In this novel, Stella was particularly excited about “Diggy Liggy Low” and “Orange Blossom Special” performed by Doug Kershaw. The bouncy music caused her to dance and hop about even dropping her precious baby brother tender love doll that she carries tightly in her arms. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Willie Nelson's Fourth of July Picnic, 1974*  
<http://allplaidout.com/2013/07/willie-nelsons-fourth-of-july-picnic-1974>

“Diggy Liggy Low” can be viewed at this online source:

*Doug Kershaw - Diggy Liggy Lo - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watchv=ubSCPbKTyWY&index=6&list=RDNJmjcYLzA54>

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“Orange Blossom Special” can be viewed at this online source:

*Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs - ‘ Orange Blossom Special ’ - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCBdiutb-50>

**Freda and the Firedogs**, “the right band, in the right town, at the right time,” banded together in 1972. The Firedogs played its final gig at Willie Nelson’s 4th of July Picnic in 1974. Freda and the Firedogs was one of the 25 greatest Austin bands of all time. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Freda and the Firedogs | SXSW 2015 Event Schedule*  
[http://schedule.sxsw.com/2015/events/event\\_MS32804](http://schedule.sxsw.com/2015/events/event_MS32804)

**"I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song"** is the title of a posthumously-released single by the **American singer-songwriter Jim Croce**. The song was written by Croce and was originally found on his album *I Got a Name*.

Croce was killed in a small-plane crash in September 1973, the same week that a 45RPM single, the title cut from his studio album *I Got a Name* was released. Following the delayed release of a song from his previous album ("Time in a Bottle") in late 1973, "I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song" was chosen as the second single released from his final studio album. It peaked at #9 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in April 1974, becoming his fifth Top 10 hit. In addition, the song went to #1 on the Billboard adult contemporary chart and reached #68 on the Billboard country music chart, Croce's only song to chart there.

Croce wrote the song in early 1973 when he arrived home and got into a disagreement with his wife, Ingrid. Instead of arguing with her, she has stated that Croce "went downstairs, and he started to play, like he always did when he wrote...the next morning, he came up early in the morning and sang it to me." This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I%27ll\\_Have\\_to\\_Say\\_I\\_Love\\_You\\_in\\_a\\_Song](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I%27ll_Have_to_Say_I_Love_You_in_a_Song)

The song can be heard at the online source:

*Jim Croce - I'll Have To Say I Love You In A Song (1973) - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EN1nMpmC0n4>

## Chapter 10

**Brackenridge Hospital**, in Austin, the oldest public hospital in Texas, opened on July 3, 1884. In 1915 a new forty-five-bed facility was completed, and between 1929 and 1941 the addition of wings on the south, west, and north sides raised the bed capacity to 208. The size of the hospital gradually increased until a \$43 million, 363-bed structure was built in several phases during the 1970s, just west of the site of the original building.

City Hospital—its name after 1907—became Brackenridge Hospital in 1929, when the city council renamed it in honor of Dr. Robert J. Brackenridge, who had served as chairman of the hospital board, led the campaign to finance the 1915 hospital building, and worked for many years toward improving medical care in Austin. Brackenridge Hospital offered Austin's first intercranial and open-heart surgery in 1948 and 1961. The city's first intensive-care unit opened there in 1960, its first cardiac-care unit in 1971, and its first alternative birth center in 1978.

In addition, the Brackenridge Emergency Room, the regional trauma center for a ten-county area, treated an average of 70,000 patients annually during the early 1990s. Brackenridge also housed the area's first nursing school, which was established in 1915 and operated by the hospital until 1984, when Austin Community College assumed responsibility for the program. After beginning an education program for interns and residents after World War II, Brackenridge became a fully accredited teaching hospital in the mid-1950s. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*BRACKENRIDGE HOSPITAL | The Handbook of Texas Online*  
*Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*  
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/sbb02>

**There have been various treatments for clubfoot** over time. The ideal treatment of clubfoot has been a matter of debate for hundreds of years. There are historical reports of both primarily operative and nonoperative strategies utilized. In more recent times, Kite introduced his method of primarily cast correction of clubfoot in the 1940s. His method in most surgeon's hands resulted in incomplete corrections and a high rate of surgery for residual deformities.

Though Ponseti published on his primarily nonoperative method of clubfoot correction in the 1960s, it did not become the gold standard until the last 10 years. His method of treatment has excellent long-term results reported for idiopathic clubfeet. In addition, his method is being used with a high rate of success in very stiff clubfeet associated with distal arthrogryposis, myelomeningocele, and a host of different genetic syndromes and genetic disorders. Success has also been reported in treating older children with

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neglected clubfoot and clubfeet that have relapsed after initial treatment with extensive soft-tissue release surgery.

Stretching exercises are taught to the parents and are performed three to four times a day while out of the foot abduction brace, emphasizing dorsiflexion of the ankle. This and additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Update on Clubfoot: Etiology and Treatment*

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2664438>

*History of Clubfoot Management | Global Clubfoot Initiative*

<http://globalclubfoot.com/clubfoot/history-of-clubfoot-management>

The good news is that The Ponseti Method of treatment, which has become accepted as the gold standard treatment over the last 10 years, is very easy on the child, non-surgical and effective in 95% of cases.

After centuries of treating clubfoot with casting and bracing, surgery became a popular option in the 1950-70's but has since been found to lead to considerable health issues later in life. The feet tend to become stiff, weak and painful, often resulting in the need for additional surgeries.

Treatment should ideally begin within a week or so of birth, since the tendons and ligaments are at their most elastic and correction occurs most easily. However, the Ponseti Method has been used very successfully on children up to the age of 6 and recently there is evidence that children as old as 16 can be treated effectively.

The Ponseti Method is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Institutes of Health. This and additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*About Clubfoot | Miraclefeet*

<https://miraclefeet.org/about-clubfoot>

## Chapter 11

**Tomlinson's Pet Supplies** was established in 1946 by Mr. T. R. Tomlinson as a chick hatchery at 49 ½ Street. As the area began to change and the pet industry began to grow in the Post World War II era, Mr. Tomlinson changed his market focus. The business developed into a full-line "feed store" offering livestock feed and supplies along with poultry. In the mid-1960's, he began wholesaling birds to other pet stores across the country. In 1971, Liniel Click bought the business. With the help of his two young sons, Marty and Scott, Liniel operated the neighborhood feed store providing everything from horse

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feed and live chickens to western boots and nursery plants. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Our History - Tomlinson's Feed*

<http://www.tomlinsons.com/history>

A **1973 General Motors ad** describes two **new car seats** especially for the small fry calling them Love Seats, and they're designed to be used in conjunction with car's seat belts. (This would have been reassuring to Harold to provide for Shane in the station wagon. Stella didn't use a car seat since her family did not buy their station wagon until 1974 when she was already four years old and rode in her favorite 3<sup>rd</sup> row rear facing seat with or without seat belt which was not mandatory.)

For children who weigh less than 40 pounds, and who are less than 40 inches tall, there's the Child Love Seat which cost \$29.95. It's made to protect the child while giving him freedom of movement for his arms and legs. There's the Infant Love Seat for babies under 20 pounds which cost \$13.10. It had adjustable shoulder straps that gently support the infant within the protective contours. The inclined surface provides added support for the head and the back. The "facing-the-rear" position gave an added measure of protection.

GM Love Seats were easy to use. They're made of lightweight, high-impact polypropylene padded with urethane foam. They're portable and conveniently stored in the trunk. But most important, they're the result of years of testing by General Motors safety engineers. Love Seats promised peace of mind and could be purchased through local Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Buick, Cadillac or GMC Truck dealers. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*GM's New Love Seats: Child Car Safety Seats (1973) - Click Americana*

<http://clickamericana.com/eras/1970s/announcing-gms-new-love-seats-child-car-seats-1973>

The date of the first law in the state of Texas for **mandatory seat belts** was September 1985, which was ahead of most other states. More details can be found on the following online source:

*Seat Belt Legislation in the United States - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seat\\_belt\\_legislation\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seat_belt_legislation_in_the_United_States)

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**Car seats** have become such an important part of parenting culture going from car, to stroller, to the house with little ones secured safely. Parents today research car seat options extensively and take extra care to get car seats checked for proper installation. But less than 30 years ago, car seats weren't required for children. It was estimated that by 1984, only half of all children under the age of four were riding in car seats.

Early car seats were created to contain children in the car rather than protect them during a crash. Until the 1960's car seats were mainly designed so that children could look out the window and parents could prevent the child from moving about the car. In the 1960's an impact protection car seat was finally designed, but due to a lack on information on the subject, the general public did not embrace the notion of children's car seats for safety.

It wasn't until the mid '70s that advocacy for children's car safety finally began to make an impact and people began to think seriously about using car seats and buckling in their children. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*History of the Car Seat*

<http://www.babble.com/baby/history-of-the-car-seat/#the-1940s>

## Chapter 12

**Hancock Center** sat on 34 acres, located 2 miles northeast of the Texas State Capitol. Its primary anchor was a 2-level (147,800 square foot) Sears. The single-level center also included Wyatt's Cafeteria, Sommers Drug, Leon's Ladies' Wear, Merle, Snyder Chenards, Merritt Men's, the El Chico Restaurant, a G.C. Murphy 5 & 10, H-E-B (Howard E. Butt) supermarket and Merle Norman Cosmetics Studio. There was also a subterranean Town Hall community center.

The proximity of Highland Mall created a great deal of commercial competition for Hancock Center. Hemmed-in by its location on a small 34 acre site, the mall was physically expanded only once; the H-E-B grocery doubled its size, with a 30,600 sq. foot northern extension, during the late 1970s.

The Hancock Center Dillard's location was shuttered in early 1990. Homart relinquished ownership of the mall in April; the buyer being Bethesda, Maryland-based Interstate Equities. They initiated a 10 million dollar renovation in July 1991. An 88,000 square foot block of stores on the southeast, which had housed Sommers Drug, was demolished. Remaining exteriors were spruced-up and the fountains and flower beds of the original mall were removed and grassed-over.

Unfortunately, the shopping center did not enjoy a retail renewal and

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slipped into decline once again. A second renovation commenced in February 1997. This time around, 143,100 square feet of retail area was knocked down. The existing Sears, its outparcel Auto Center, the original H-E-B structure and a two small sections of stores were retained and remodeled. A 90,200 square foot H-E-B Superstore was built, along with three open-air store blocks. H-E-B commenced operations at its new location March 21, 1998. The remainder of the new complex was dedicated soon after.

Hancock Center now encompassed 410,400 leasable square feet and housed tenants such as Petco, 24 Hour Fitness and Bath & Body Works. The shopping venue was acquired by Jacksonville, Florida-based Regency Centers in 1999. More information can be found at the following online source:

### *MALL HALL OF FAME*

<http://mall-hall-of-fame.blogspot.com/2009/06/hancock-center-east-41st-and-red-river.html>

By May 1964 Sears' grand creation opened its doors, hailed by the press, the business community, and the city government as a wonder of the modern world. **Hancock Center** turned out to be pleasantly surprising to those that originally opposed it. To tastes of the time, it was mighty attractive, with its "parklike" setting, famous fountains, tinkling background music. Its subterranean Town Hall promised to be a crossroads and gathering place for the same citizens and neighbors who had expected the center to turn its back on its surroundings. And Austin had never seen anything so big — at 500,000 square feet, Hancock was possibly the largest purely private-sector project in Austin at that time — that had been master-planned as a whole and built out to its full future size by Opening Day.

It seems unlikely that the creators of Hancock Center thought their "oasis of grandeur," their "unsurpassed pleasure" in "a setting to dazzle the imagination," would exhaust its design life in less than 30 years. Or perhaps even more quickly than that — as late as the 1980s, most of Hancock was still occupied (although one of the original buildings had already been razed), all the anchor department stores were in place, the HEB was just a grocery store rather than a mega-market-extravaganza, and the fountain still worked. It wasn't until the 1990's — when many of the trends we presume killed off Hancock Center, like mega mall competition, the flight to the suburbs, and The Bust, had already begun to diminish in their impact — that Hancock slipped from an under performing retail complex to a terminal case. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

### *Hancock Center; R.I.P. Everything Old Is New Again at 41st & I-35 - News - The Austin Chronicle*

<http://www.austinchronicle.com/news/1997-02-14/527385>

## Chapter 13

**Epilepsy** can have both genetic and acquired causes, with interaction of these factors in many cases. Established acquired causes include serious brain trauma, stroke, tumors and problems in the brain as a result of a previous infective. In about 60% of cases the cause is unknown. Epilepsy caused by genetic, congenital, or developmental conditions are more common among younger people, while brain tumors and strokes are more likely in older people. Seizures may also occur as a consequence of other health problems; if they occur right around a specific cause, such as a stroke, head injury, toxic ingestion or metabolic problem, they are known as acute symptomatic seizures and are in the broader classification of seizure-related disorders rather than epilepsy itself.

There are six main types of generalized seizures: tonic-clonic, tonic, clonic, myoclonic, absence, and atonic seizures. They all involve loss of consciousness and typically happen without warning.

Tonic-clonic seizures present with a contraction of the limbs followed by their extension along with arching of the back which lasts 10–30 seconds (the tonic phase). A cry may be heard due to contraction of the chest muscles. This is then followed by a shaking of the limbs in unison (clonic phase). Tonic seizures produce constant contractions of the muscles. A person often turns blue as breathing is stopped. In clonic seizures there is shaking of the limbs in unison. After the shaking has stopped it may take 10–30 minutes for the person to return to normal; this period is called the "postictal state" or "postictal phase". Loss of bowel or bladder control may occur during a seizure. The tongue may be bitten at either the tip or on the sides during a seizure. In tonic-clonic seizure, bites to the sides are more common. Tongue bites are also relatively common in psychogenic non-epileptic seizures.

Myoclonic seizures involve spasms of muscles in either a few areas or all over. Absence seizures can be subtle with only a slight turn of the head or eye blinking. The person does not fall over and returns to normal right after it ends. Atonic seizures involve the loss of muscle activity for greater than one second. This typically occurs on both sides of the body.

About 6% of those with epilepsy have seizures that are often triggered by specific events and are known as reflex seizures. Those with reflex epilepsy have seizures that are only triggered by specific stimuli. Common triggers include flashing lights and sudden noises. In certain types of epilepsy, seizures happen more often during sleep, and in other types they occur almost only when sleeping.

Epileptic seizures are the result of excessive and abnormal cortical nerve cell activity in the brain. The diagnosis typically involves ruling out other conditions that might cause similar symptoms such as fainting. Additionally, making the diagnosis involves determining if any other cause of seizures is

present such as alcohol withdrawal or electrolyte problems. This may be done by imaging the brain and performing blood tests. Epilepsy can often be confirmed with an electroencephalogram (EEG)

An electroencephalogram (EEG) can assist in showing brain activity suggestive of an increased risk of seizures. It is only recommended for those who are likely to have had an epileptic seizure on the basis of symptoms. In the diagnosis of epilepsy, electroencephalography may help distinguish the type of seizure or syndrome present.

The mainstay treatment of epilepsy is anti-convulsant medications, possibly for the person's entire life. The choice of anti-convulsant is based on seizure type, epilepsy syndrome, other medications used, other health problems, and the person's age and lifestyle. A single medication is recommended initially; if this is not effective, switching to a single other medication is recommended. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Epilepsy - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epilepsy>

## Chapter 14

The **Americana Theatre**, which opened in 1965 in what was then a small neighborhood located just off of Burnet Road in Austin, Texas. The theater was built by Earl Podolnick, President of Trans-Texas Theaters Inc., in an effort to raise the community's local profile. Along with his wife Lena, Earl went to great lengths to ensure The Americana was a theater rooted in luxury. Although common today, the Americana offered state of the art sound and projection, selected rows with tables with which to set down refreshments and seats with built-in rockers; all features considered unique of movie theaters of the time. Additionally, the Americana offered what was known an "exotic ladies lounge" and a color TV waiting area. The Americana had lines forming around the block every weekend, regardless of what was playing at the one-screen theater.

For nearly two decades, The Americana presented the best that cinema of the time had to offer in terms of the movie-going experience and in terms of the films themselves, running the gamut from westerns to Star Wars, occasionally even holding special premiere screenings for such films as Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.

By the early 1980s, however, the writing was on the wall for The Americana, as attendance had begun to decline. When a conflict between AMC and Disney locked The Americana into a 18-week obligation to screen Annie, the cinema's days became numbered and the lights permanently shut

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down three years later.

The Americana's closing was in many ways a representation of the changing state of movies themselves during that time. When After The Americana shut down in 1985, the building was turned over to Podolnick's son, who in the early 90s used the space for his rock band's rehearsal sessions. In 1993, however, a petition was started to re-open the Americana as the permanent home for the then-North Loop branch of the Austin Public Library. Following six years of petitioning and renovating, the changes were complete and the Americana officially began its new life as the Yarborough branch. Rich-Wulfmeyer is its current manager. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Austin Vintage Theater Tour: The Americana | Slackerwood*  
<http://www.slackerwood.com/node/3818>

When **The Carol Burnett Show** aired in September of 1967 on CBS, no one expected it to run eleven years. The show gave Carol Burnett, along with regulars Harvey Korman, Vicki Lawrence, Lyle Waggoner (who left in 1974), and Tim Conway (whose occasional guest appearances became permanent in 1975) an opportunity to fuse the best of live, vaudeville-style performance with the creative benefits of time and tape. Burnett's ensemble quickly bonded into a tight unit of professionals who looked, and acted, as if performing on The Carol Burnett Show was the best fun an entertainer could have.

The show centered on Burnett, but its enduring qualities also arose from its talented ensemble of players, whose interactions contributed to the overwhelming sense of "live" performance exuded by the show. Vicki Lawrence was fresh out of high school when her resemblance to Burnett won her a role; her transformation from sprightly youth to dour Mama astonished and delighted audience and cast. The infamous comic rivalry between perennial bemused Harvey Korman and the irrepressible Tim Conway remains one of the show's most distinctive features, as Conway's scripted and ad-libbed highjinks forced Korman to battle uncontrollable laughter during skits. Bits would halt as Korman struggled to stay in character; Conway would continue to pile on more egregious additions, trying to break up his costar. While the other cast members joined in unexpected break-ups, the anarchic camaraderie of Korman and Conway became legendary. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Carol Burnett Show, The (1967-1978) | Archive of American Television*  
<http://www.emmytvlegends.org/interviews/shows/carol-burnett-show-the-1967-1978>

**The Apple Dumpling Gang**, a popular Disney Film, The Apple Dumpling Gang is a 1975 Disney film about a slick gambler named Russell Donovan (Bill Bixby) who is duped into taking care of a group of orphans who eventually strike gold during the California Gold Rush. The film is based on the novel of the same name by Jack Bickham. The so-called "Apple Dumpling Gang" is named after the American dessert treat, the apple dumpling. Buddy Baker composed the music for it and its 1979 sequel, The Apple Dumpling Gang Rides Again. The song "The Apple Dumpling Gang", as heard in the opening and closing credits, was composed by Shane Tatum and was sung/performed by Randy Sparks and The Back Porch Majority. This and additional information can be found at the following online source:

*The Apple Dumpling Gang (film) - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Apple\\_Dumpling\\_Gang\\_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Apple_Dumpling_Gang_(film))

Harold remembered one of the conversations from The Apple Dumpling Gang because it seemed so appropriate to his family circumstances. "Well, there's one good thing about luck - it always changes. And I got a feeling mine is just around the corner."

*The Apple Dumpling Gang (film) - Wikiquote*  
[http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/The\\_Apple\\_Dumpling\\_Gang\\_\(film\)](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/The_Apple_Dumpling_Gang_(film))

## Chapter 15

Sunset Valley Elementary opened in August 1971 and it was considered to be out in the country. Much of the area around the school was farm land or undeveloped. Many of the roads had only just been paved in the 1960s. The City of Sunset Valley, which had been incorporated in September 1954, was beginning to feel the expanding City of Austin bumping up against its boundaries. The school had under 250 students in grades one through six that first year. Kindergarten was still being established in Texas. Most of the new students were drawn from Joslin, Cunningham and Barton Hills Elementary schools. The school serviced essentially all of what was then considered southwest Austin.

An early PTA document offered this description: "The newest elementary school in Austin, Sunset Valley, has been built with a large media center or library centrally located. Semi-open learning areas are located on each side of the library and are arranged with units for contained classrooms and open areas for learning circles. Basically three grades occupy each area. The cafetorium is equipped to be used for eating with tables and chairs or as an auditorium. The stage is complete with curtain and sound equipment. The

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back portion of the auditorium is equipped for use as a gymnasium.”

Since the school was so crowded during the 1970s there were many portable buildings in use. As many as ten classes were out in the portables, roughly a third of the school. At first mainly kindergarten and first grade used the portables. The portables were remodeled and in Fall 1979 fourth and fifth grade began using them while kinder and first moved into the building. Fifth grade classes had as many as 32 students. Throughout much of the 1970s music teacher Kay Greenhaw cultivated a select group of 5th graders called the Sunset Singers. Over the years they gained more and more recognition performing around town in addition to school events. This and additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Sunset Valley Elementary*

<http://www.austinschools.org/campus/sunsetvalley/history/index.html>

*Sunset Valley 1970s | Flickr - Photo Sharing!*

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/mbellphotos/sets/72157625939191946/with/5399511992>

## Chapter 16

Harold Walker's musician acquaintances included many famous people who he met while working at the **Armadillo World Headquarters**. During the 1970s the Armadillo World Headquarters, a concert hall in Austin, became the focus of a musical renaissance that made the city a nationally recognized music capital. Launched in a converted National Guard armory by a group of local music partners—Eddie Wilson, Spencer Perskin, Jim Franklin, Mike Tolleson, Bobby Hedderman, and others—the "Armadillo" provided a large and increasingly sophisticated alternative venue to the municipal auditorium across the street. This venture, which capped several years of searching by young musicians and artists to find a place of their own, reflected the emergence nationwide of a counterculture of alternative forms of music, art, and modes of living. The name Armadillo World Headquarters evoked both a cosmic consciousness and the image of a peaceable native critter, the armadillo, often seen on Texas highways as the victim of high-speed vehicles.

The Armadillo opened its doors in August 1970 and quickly became the focus for much of the city's musical life. With an eventual capacity of 1,500, the hall featured a varied fare of blues, rock, jazz, folk, and country music in an informal, open atmosphere. The Armadillo closed its doors on December 31, 1980. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

Judy K Johnson

*ARMADILLO WORLD HEADQUARTERS | The Handbook of  
Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association*  
(TSHA)<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/xda01>

**Bobbie Nelson**, sister of famed Willie Nelson, plays piano in Willie Nelson's Family Band, an ensemble known for its close-knit camaraderie, longevity and spirited live shows, "Sister Bobbie" Nelson, 80, is the heart and soul. Raised by their grandparents in the Depression-era Central Texas cotton-farming community of Abbott, Bobbie Lee and her younger brother Willie Hugh discovered that music was both a refuge and a source of solace and community.

"Music is my life. I suppose I was born into it. Our grandmother and grandfather raised Willie and me, and they studied music. They had lessons they received in the mail about writing music and theory. My grandmother actually taught me music before I even started school. Willie and I had each other as we were growing up. I looked after him because I was older, but Willie has taught me a lot about my outlook on life. He has such a positive outlook. I had a few emotional difficulties during my younger life, and he was always there for me. And I was there for his difficulties also. We have learned from each other, I suppose, true love. We are thoroughly bonded and love each other unconditionally."

"When we were first starting out, the Armadillo World Headquarters was a very new experience. Not only were we playing for the long-haired hippies, we were playing for the cowboys. And we felt that we were joining people together in the experience of music, which does bring people together. You can communicate with music."

"During any kind of emotional state I'm in, I can go to that piano to express myself in joy and sorrow. It's my comforter. And as I do that, it seems that it speaks back to me and heals me. As we walk through life, we all learn our own lessons or we experience them, anyway."

This and additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Bobbie Nelson: 46 Years in Austin - Austin Monthly - July 2011 - Austin, TX.*  
<http://www.austinmonthly.com/AM/July-2011/Bobbie-Nelson-46-Years-in-Austin>

Videos about Bobbie Nelson piano player (Willie Nelson's band):

*Willie Nelson and His 'Little Sister', Bobbie Nelson – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7DJbY7CwSI>

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*Willie Nelson Interviews Bobbie Nelson- Part 2 – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rMF26OymvM>

*Willie Nelson, Sister Bobbie - Who 'll Buy My Memories – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ti5qYytrLtY>

**Marcia Ball**, music scene, pianist-singer has a well-established presence on the Austin, Texas, performing a jubilant, heartfelt brand of Louisiana-Texas rhythm and blues, supper club soul, and old-time rock 'n' roll. Part James Booker and part Professor Longhair, with the sultry, bluesy vocal delivery of T-Bone Walker tossed in for good measure, her rollicking style has won the six-foot Ball notice on the thriving New Orleans R&B circuit. She is particularly impressive during live concerts, when the audience can witness her scream, shout, and wring every drop of emotion out of song, all while playing piano in her trademarked, cross-legged style.

Born in Orange, Texas, and raised in Vinton, Louisiana, which was just across the Sabine River and the Texas border, Ball comes from a long line of instrumentalists: her grandmother was a pianist, her father was a composer, and her aunt was a pianist. Ball's family was her first and strongest musical influence, but local Cajun sounds and the soul music she heard on local radio stations also played roles in developing her musical tastes. Ball began taking piano lessons at 5 and would continue taking them until she was 14.

Marcia Ball, the Texas-born, Louisiana-raised musical storyteller has earned worldwide fame for her ability to ignite a full-scale roadhouse rhythm and blues party every time she strolls onto the stage. Her groove-laden New Orleans boogie, deeply soulful ballads and rollicking Gulf Coast blues have made her a one-of-a-kind favorite with music fans all over the world. This and additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Marcia Ball Facts, Information, Pictures | Encyclopedia.com*  
*Articles about Marcia Ball*  
[http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Marcia\\_Ball.aspx](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Marcia_Ball.aspx)

*Marcia Ball: Biography*  
<http://www.marciaball.com/bio-1.html>

This online link to Marcia Ball singing “La Ti Da” is a great sample of the style that fascinated, Stella who mimics her leg bouncing style:

*Marcia Ball - La Ti Da (Live on ACL 1990) – YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BZD80FEn30>

## Chapter 17

In the school year 1980-81, Sunset Valley was mandated by AISD to bus students in fifth and sixth grade to **Blackshear Elementary** which was largely African-American and Hispanic population. The U.S. Supreme Court ordered that AISD make schools more racially balanced. The busing continued until the start of the 1987-88 school year.

In the novel, Stella attended 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Blackshear Elementary as Shane attended 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at Sunset Valley Elementary; Stella attended 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Bedicheck while Shane attended 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at Sunset Valley Elementary; Stella attended 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade at Bedicheck while Shane attended 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Blackshear; Stella attended 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Crocket High School while Shane attended 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Blackshear; Stella attended 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade at Crocket while Shane attended Bedicheck. So due to their 4 year age difference, and AISD busing for desegregation, Stella and Shane never actually attend school together during 1-12<sup>th</sup> grades. A fact that contributes to Stella's denial of her relationship with her brother, Shane. This and additional information about desegregation and busing at Sunset Valley Elementary can be found at the following online sources:

*Sunset Valley Elementary*

<http://www.austinschools.org/campus/sunsetvalley/history/1980s.html>

## Chapter 18

**Whole Foods** is a landmark food business in Austin, Texas. In 1978, twenty-five-year-old college dropout John Mackey and twenty-one-year-old Renee Lawson (Hardy), borrowed \$45,000 from family and friends to open the doors of a small natural foods store called SaferWay (the name being a spoof of Safeway) in Austin, Texas. When the couple got booted out of their apartment for storing food products there, they decided to simply live at the store. Since it was zoned commercial, there was no shower stall. Instead, they bathed in the Hobart dishwasher, which had an attached water hose.

Two years later, John and Renee partnered with Craig Weller and Mark Skiles to merge SaferWay with their Clarksville Natural Grocery, resulting in the opening of the original Whole Foods Market on September 20, 1980. At 10,500 square feet and a staff of 19, this store was quite large in comparison to the standard health food store of the time.

Less than a year later, on Memorial Day in 1981, the worst flood in 70 years devastated the city of Austin. Caught in the flood waters, the store's inventory was wiped out and most of the equipment was damaged. The losses were approximately \$400,000 and Whole Foods Market had no insurance. Customers and neighbors voluntarily joined the staff to repair and clean up

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the damage. Creditors, vendors and investors all provided breathing room for the store to get back on its feet and it re-opened only 28 days after the flood. This and additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Whole Foods Market History | Whole Foods Market*  
<http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/company-info/whole-foods-market-history>

*Whole Foods Market - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whole\\_Foods\\_Market](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whole_Foods_Market)

**Rolling Stones Magazine, RS 341, “Ry Cooder's Roots**, From Tex-Mex to R&B – looking to the past for fame and fortune,” by James Henke, April 16, 1981 featured a lengthy article about Ry Cooder. Part of his life history detailed information about how Ry was blinded in one eye at the age of four. He was fitted with a glass eye which gave the appearance of a normal face. This story prompted Harold and Mony to pursue this option for Shane to improve his appear and confidence. This and additional information can be found at the following online resources:

*Ry Cooder's Roots | Rolling Stone*  
<http://www.rollingstone.com/music/features/ry-cooders-roots-19810416>

*Ry Cooder - I Think It's Going To Work Out Fine - YouTube*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_oYzxkfzJZ0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_oYzxkfzJZ0)

*Ry Cooder - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ry\\_Cooder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ry_Cooder)

**Breast Cancer Diagnosis** did often include mammography at the time that Mony had early state breast cancer. Before 1983, because mammography was limited to women with breast complaints, almost no screening mammography was performed. By 1983, national studies began demonstrating the benefits of screening for the early diagnosis of breast cancer. It became the responsibility of the individual clinician, or the insistent patient, for mammography to be ordered. Within months, mammography began to be performed more frequently in women between the ages of 50 and 70 years.

Mony did not have early diagnosis of breast cancer because she was not an insistent patient. She did not have routine preventive doctor visits because she spent all her efforts improving the health of her son, Shane. Additional

information can be found at the following online sources:

*Early Detection of Breast Cancer Using a Self-Referral  
Mammography Process: The Kaiser Permanente Northwest 20-Year  
History*

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3951030>

## Chapter 19

In 1968, five years after she had started a summer day camp for children and adults with intellectual disabilities at her home in Maryland, Eunice Kennedy Shriver saw her dream realized in Chicago at the first **International Special Olympics Summer Games**.

On July 20, 1968, together with the Chicago Park District, the Kennedy Foundation hosted the competition which included 1,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities from 26 states and Canada competing in athletics, floor hockey and aquatics.

Five months later, Special Olympics, Inc. was established as a not-for-profit charitable organization under the laws of the District of Columbia. The National Association for Retarded Citizens, the Council for Exceptional Children, and the American Association on Mental Deficiency pledged their support for this first systematic effort to provide sports training and athletic competition for individuals with intellectual disabilities based on the Olympic tradition and spirit.

Special Olympics began in Texas in 1969 within the recreation division of the Texas Association for Retarded Citizens (TARC). The first Summer Games was hosted at Paul Tyson Stadium in Waco, June 6-7, 1969 with 350 athletes competing in 10 track and field events.

In 1974, Special Olympics moved the Summer Games to the University of Texas at Austin, the home of the competition for the 15 consecutive years and 18 total. More than 1,400 athletes competed in the event.

By 1978, Texas Special Olympics was established as a separate, non-profit organization. The Summer Games introduced a quota for track and field events of 2,400 athletes, encouraging athletes to participate in the other two sports of aquatics and gymnastics.

During the 15 consecutive years that the Summer Games were held at the University of Texas, the program saw tremendous growth. The 1982 Summer Games were the largest on record with 4,000 athletes competing. The Law Enforcement Torch Run in Texas began in 1985 when a small group of Houston police officers carried a Special Olympics torch to the Houston city limits and gave it to a group from the Bexar County Mounted Patrol. The county officers, on horseback, carried the Torch to Austin to help open the

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Summer Games. This information is found at the following online source:

*Special Olympics Texas History*

<http://www.sotx.org/about/history.html>

*Special Olympics - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special\\_Olympics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Olympics)

### Chapter 20

This one paragraph chapter reflects Stella's repressed memory of her mother's death at the very same hospital that her brother Shane was born. She has suffered several tragedies here while sitting in a waiting room.

Brackenridge recognized the need for more visitor support for those spending lots of time in waiting rooms. **Brackenridge Tranquility Garden** completed construction and was ready for use by May 2012. And, it's amazing. There's a new trellis design, two relaxing water features, some nice textual stone paving, the Prelude sculpture, a 15-foot-tall bronze sculpture and lots of nice, lush landscaping. It's a wonderful garden space for the ICU visitors, hospital visitors and staff as well.

*The University Medical Center Brackenridge Tranquility Garden |*

*Just Another WordPress.com Weblog*

<https://healingbydesign.wordpress.com>

### Chapter 21

**First Texas Honda** originated On March 3, 1986, when Bryan Hardeman started a new dealership, which, as the name suggests, can proudly call itself the first Honda dealership in Texas. At the time of its opening, the First Texas Honda facility was the largest Honda dealership in the world. We still have the framed letter in his office from Governor Mark White congratulating Mr. Hardeman on the dealership's grand opening. Mr. Hardeman even had a black Labrador Retriever named Honda! This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Continental Automotive Group | New Mercedes-Benz, BMW,*

*Subaru, Honda, Infiniti Dealership in Austin, TX 78752*

<http://www.cagaustin.com/company-history.htm>

**Gas Prices** and other information about 1988 can be found at the following online sources:

*What Happened in 1988 Inc. Pop Culture, Prices and Events*  
<http://www.thepeoplehistory.com/1988.html>

**Waterloo Records** opened its doors on April 1, 1982. Austin was not quite the same town that it is today. The computer industries had arrived in the mid-seventies, but had yet to begin drawing the number of people into town that they would start to bring by the turn of the decade. Nor had Austin's reputation as a premier arts town – especially in both music and film – swelled its ranks of the creatively inclined. Simply put, Austin was a lot smaller. Waterloo catered to the music lover, if only because we were music lovers too. It was true then, it certainly still is today.

From the outset, Waterloo's policies were a success. Customers could listen to any album in the store before buying. Not unprecedented in the history of music retail sales of course, but since the advent of shrink wrap, a virtually forgotten practice. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Waterloo Records - About Us*  
<http://www.waterloorecords.com/CustomPage/216>

**Music CD History** The first commercial compact disc was produced on 17 August 1982. It was a recording from 1979 of Claudio Arrau performing Chopin waltzes (Philips 400 025-2). The first popular music CD produced at the new factory was The Visitors (1981) by ABBA. The first album to be released on CD was Billy Joel's 52nd Street, which reached the market alongside Sony's CDP-101 CD player on 1 October 1982 in Japan. The Japanese launch was followed in March 1983 by the introduction of CD players and discs to Europe and North America (where CBS Records released sixteen titles). This event is often seen as the "Big Bang" of the digital audio revolution.

The new audio disc was enthusiastically received, especially in the early-adopting classical music and audiophile communities, and its handling quality received particular praise. As the price of players gradually came down, the CD began to gain popularity in the larger popular and rock music markets. The first artist to sell a million copies on CD was Dire Straits, with its 1985 album Brothers in Arms. The first major artist to have his entire catalogue converted to CD was David Bowie, whose 15 studio albums were made available by RCA Records in February 1985, along with four greatest hits albums. In 1988, 400 million CDs were manufactured by 50 pressing plants around the world. Information can be found at these online sources:

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*Compact Disc. Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Compact\\_disc&oldid=667940357](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Compact_disc&oldid=667940357)

*The CD Player Turns 30." TechHive*

<http://www.techhive.com/article/2010810/the-cd-player-turns-30.html>

Bobby McFerrin's No. 1 US Pop Hit in 1988 was **“Don't Worry Be Happy”**. It won Song of the Year and Record of the Year honors at the 1989 Grammy Awards. He is a ten-time Grammy Award winner, who is known for his unique vocal techniques, such as singing fluidly but with quick and considerable jumps in pitch—for example, sustaining a melody while also rapidly alternating with arpeggios and harmonies—as well as scat singing, polyphonic overtone singing, vocal basslines, and improvisational vocal percussion. He is widely known for performing and recording regularly as an unaccompanied solo vocal artist. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Bobby McFerrin - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bobby\\_McFerrin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bobby_McFerrin)

This song can be listened to at the following online source:

*Bobby McFerrin - Don't Worry Be Happy - YouTube*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yv-Fk1PwVeU>

## Chapter 22

**TWU, Texas Woman's University** was established by an act of the 27th Legislature in 1901 which founded the Girls Industrial College as a public institution that would become Texas Woman's University in 1957. The school had then and has now a dual mission: to provide a liberal education and to prepare young women "for the practical industries of the age" with a specialized education. Men have been admitted to TWU since 1972.

TWU continues today as a public university that offers a comprehensive catalog of academic studies, including baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees. Now in its tenth decade, the University has grown from a small college to a major university. TWU is the largest university primarily for women in the United States, with the main campus in Denton and health science centers in Dallas and Houston. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

Judy K Johnson

*Brief History of TWU - TWU Administration - Texas Woman's University*

<http://www.twu.edu/administration/brief-history.asp>

The **Austin State School**, in Austin, Texas, is a ninety-five-acre residential and training facility for adults with developmental disabilities. It is administered by the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. In 1915 the Texas legislature passed a bill to establish the state's first facility for the retarded, some of whom had been housed at the Austin State Lunatic Asylum until then.

During the early 1990s, the school consistently achieved ACDD accreditation; it was only the second Texas state intermediate-care facility to comply with the council's 600 standards. By 1988, 1,450 staff members were serving about 550 residents at the facility and several hundred more in Central Texas communities. The Community Services division added eighteen employees to the total 1991 Austin State School workforce of 1,505 to initiate services for about seventy disabled residents of nursing homes in the school's catchment area. With the 1992 final resolution of the *Lelsz v. Kavanaugh* suit, Austin State School increased its emphases on community placement and respite programs, rather than routine institutionalization. The school obtained more commercial work contracts, allowing it to change most prevocational training programs to vocational operations, thereby paying more residents wages for performing even simple jobs. By 1993 the vocational services staff had moved the school's sheltered workshops from the annex campus to a local commercial site. All of these measures contributed to the gradual normalizing of residents' lives to resemble those of the general populace. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*AUSTIN STATE SCHOOL | The Handbook of Texas Online| Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*

<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/sba08>

## Chapter 23

**School policy in 1982** for each student, the identification of a handicap or impairment is determined from a comprehensive individual assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to determine: (1) if a physical, mental, or emotional disability exists; (2) if a significant educational deficit exists; and (3) the student's specific learning competencies.

Based on the comprehensive assessment, the decision is made whether to place a student in **Special Education**. This decision can be made only by an

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Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee composed of school staff and parents as stipulated by the State Board of Education Rules for Handicapped Students. If a student is considered eligible for and requires Special Education, an individual educational plan (IEP) is developed by the school and parents.

The IEP outlines the special education instruction and related services (such as speech therapy, occupational and physical therapy, counseling, etc.) a student is to receive. The student is then placed in the least restrictive environment which meets the student's needs. Review of the program placement by an ARD Committee occurs at least annually. A complete reevaluation of the student's needs and placement is conducted every three years.

In June, 1981, a Five-Year Comprehensive Special Education Plan was drawn up by Special Education staff. The plan contains 33 objectives grouped, as shown in parentheses, under five subprogram areas: Child Identification/Appraisal (11), Placement Services (2), Program Development/Implementation (7), Personnel Development (6), and Program Support Systems Resources (7).

In 1986, with many of the activities completed or superseded by newer activities, the plan served as a guidebook orienting Special Education staff to the direction the program has taken in the past through the present.

**Glossary of Special Education Terms** as defined in 1986: (Most definitions are taken from State Board of Education Rules For Handicapped Students.)

**Auditorially handicapped students:**

Students whose hearing is so impaired that they cannot be adequately educated in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

**Autistic students:**

Students whose disturbances of speech and language, relatedness, perception, developmental rate, and motility are such that they cannot be adequately educated in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

**Emotionally disturbed students:**

Students whose emotional condition is psychologically or psychiatrically determine(' to be such that they cannot be adequately and safely educated in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

**Handicapped students:**

Students between the ages of 3 and 21, inclusive; (A) with educational handicaps (physically handicapped, auditorially handicapped, visually handicapped, mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, speech handicapped, autistic, or multiply handicapped); and children leaving and not attending public school for a time because of pregnancy; (B) whose disabilities are so limiting as to require the provision of special services in place of or in addition to instruction in the regular classroom.

**Hearing impaired and deaf:** See Auditorially handicapped.

**IEP:**

The term "Individualized Education Program" means a written statement for a handicapped child that is developed and implemented in accordance with federal regulations. Texas uses the term "Individual Educational Plan." The two terms should be considered synonymous.

**Learning disabled students:**

Students: (A) who demonstrate a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more of the areas of oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics reasoning, or spelling; (B) for whom it is determined that the discrepancy is not primarily the result of visual handicap, hearing impairment, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage; and (C) for whom the inherent disability exists to a degree such that they cannot be adequately served in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

**Mentally retarded students:**

Students with significantly sub average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficiencies in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period such that they cannot be adequately educated in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

**Multiply handicapped students:**

Students handicapped by two or more handicapping conditions that may result in multisensory or motor deficiencies and developmental lags in the cognitive, affective, or psychomotor areas such that they cannot be adequately educated in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

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### **Orthopedically handicapped:**

A severe orthopedic impairment which adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns which cause contractures).

### **Other health impaired students:**

Students: (i) having an autistic condition which is manifested by severe communication and other developmental and educational problems; or (ii) having limited strength, vitality or alertness, due to chronic or acute health problems such as- a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic Fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, or diabetes, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

### **Physically handicapped students:**

Students whose body functions or members are so impaired from any cause that they cannot be adequately or safely educated in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

### **Related services:**

These are services which are developmental, corrective, supportive, or evaluative services, not instructional in nature, that may be required for the proper development and implementation of a handicapped student's individualized educational plan, including but not limited to special transportation, school health services, counseling with students or families, psychological services, audiological services, visual training, medical or psychiatric diagnostic services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, recreations' therapy, social work services, parent counseling and training, adaptive equipment, special seating, orientation and mobility training, speech therapy, music therapy, and corrective therapy.

### **Special Education:**

The provision of educational services, either in addition to or instead of regular classroom instruction, designed to meet the educational needs of students whose school learning is either hindered by handicapping condition or significantly above or below school standards.

### **Special services means:**

"special teaching," which may be provided by professional and paraprofessional personnel in the following instructional settings: (i) resource room; (ii) self-contained classroom, regular or special campus; (iii) hospital

or community class; (iv) home bound or bedside; (v) speech or hearing therapy class.

**Speech handicapped students:**

Students whose speech is so impaired that they cannot be adequately educated in regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

**Speech only students:**

These are the students whose only handicapping condition is speech and who receive services from a Speech teacher. These students do not receive any other Special Education services.

**Visually handicapped students:**

Students whose sight is so impaired that they cannot be adequately or safely educated in the regular classes of the public schools without the provision of special services.

The Special Education administrators comprising the **Special Education Coordinating Council** were interviewed as a group in December, 1985. To the question, "Are there any ways in which you feel the services provided by Special Education go beyond the basic federal and/or state requirements for serving handicapped students?" administrators named the Special Olympics and transportation for Texas School for the Deaf students placed by their parents.

The policy analysis conducted by the consultant to ORE provides another source of information relative to the question of excess services. The consultant identified the following programs and services as areas which be excessive in relation to state and federal requirements. Health Services personnel currently provide extensive services such as physical examinations and x-rays in conjunction with the Special Olympics. These services require the time of the school physician and P.E. instructor for coordination. The Special Olympics is not an AISD program. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*ED290245.pdf." Special Education in AISD: Context and Program Description. 1985-86*

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED290245.pdf>

The term **mentally retarded** was used to replace terms like idiot, moron, and imbecile because retarded was not then a derogatory term. By the 1960s, however, the term had taken on a partially derogatory meaning as well. The noun retard is particularly seen as pejorative; a BBC survey in 2003 ranked it

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as the most offensive disability-related word, ahead of terms such as spastic (or its abbreviation spaz) and mong. The terms mentally retarded and mental retardation are still fairly common, but currently the Special Olympics, Best Buddies and over 100 other organizations are striving to eliminate their by referring to the word retard and its variants as the "r-word", in an effort to equate it to the word nigger and the associated euphemism "n-word", in everyday conversation. These efforts have resulted in federal legislation, sometimes known as "Rosa's Law", to replace the term mentally retarded with the term intellectual disability in some federal statutes.

The term mental retardation was a diagnostic term denoting the group of disconnected categories of mental functioning such as idiot, imbecile, and moron derived from early IQ tests, which acquired pejorative connotations in popular discourse. It acquired negative and shameful connotations over the last few decades due to the use of the words retarded and retard as insults. This may have contributed to its replacement with euphemisms such as mentally challenged or intellectually disabled. While developmental disability includes many other disorders (see below), developmental disability and developmental delay (for people under the age of 18), are generally considered more polite terms than mental retardation. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Intellectual Disability - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intellectual\\_disability](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intellectual_disability)

An **ocular prosthesis** or artificial eye is a type of craniofacial prosthesis that replaces an absent natural eye. The prosthesis fits over an orbital implant and under the eyelids. Often referred to as a glass eye, the ocular prosthesis roughly takes the shape of a convex shell and is made of medical grade plastic acrylic. A variant of the ocular prosthesis is a very thin hard shell known as a scleral shell which can be worn over a damaged or eviscerated eye. Makers of ocular prosthetics are known as ocularists. An ocular prosthesis does not provide vision; this would be a visual prosthesis. Someone with an ocular prosthesis is totally blind on the affected side and has monocular (one sided) vision. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Ocular Prosthesis - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ocular\\_prosthesis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ocular_prosthesis)

## Chapter 24

Stella and her roommate, Dana, spend time touring the TWU campus during their Thanksgiving break. They visited the **Chapel-in-the-Woods**, a small 110 seat chapel and also the Margo Jones Performance Hall , the primary performance facility for the Department of Music at TWU. The performance hall was under renovation and both Stella and Dana wondered if they might one day perform on that stage. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Texas Woman's University - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas\\_Woman%27s\\_University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_Woman%27s_University)

*Little Chapel in the Woods - TWU Conference Services - Texas Woman's University*  
<http://www.twu.edu/conference-services/little-chapel.asp>

*Margo Jones Performance Hall Event Spaces - TWU Conference Services - Texas Woman's University*  
<http://www.twu.edu/conference-services/14511.asp>

Stella and Dana were very fond of their **Professor of Music, Dr. Nancy Hadsell** and also impressed with other famous alumnae of TWU. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Famous Alumnae - TWU TWU Libraries - Texas Woman's University*  
<http://www.twu.edu/library/famous-alumnae.asp>

*Dr. Nancy Hadsell - TWU Music - Texas Woman's University*  
<http://www.twu.edu/music/hadsell.asp>

Stella's new roommate is **Dana** who is also very talented musician. The name Dana is an is the word that defines a powerful person who is not consumed by power and still has empathy. Danas are extremely competent in all aspects, intelligent, respectful, and well-mannered. Not only are they also very beautiful creatures, they have a good sense of humor. Dana does NOT come from Danae or Diana or Diane, in fact. Dana is a word all on itself, created to define awesome people.

“Dāna” (pron. dahna) is also a word meaning “generosity” or “giving.” It also refers to the practice of cultivating generosity. Dāna is the first of what are called the Six Buddhist Paramis or Perfections: generosity, ethics, patience, joyful effort, concentration and wisdom. Through our conscious

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efforts, every being “perfects” each of these virtues on the path to awakening. Buddhist teachings hold that dāna is the foundation of all the paramis, and strengthens our own ability to be generous. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Urban Dictionary: Dana*

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Dana>

*What Is Dana in Buddhism?*

<http://www.planetdharma.com/what-is-dana>

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Stella and Dana were roommates in **Guinn Residence Hall**, a 24 story building that stood across The Commons from Stark Residence Hall. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Residence Halls and Apartment Communities with Floor Plans - TWU Department of University Housing - Texas Woman's University*

<http://www.twu.edu/housing/residence-halls.asp>

*Guinn Hall - TWU Department of University Housing - Texas Woman's University*

<http://www.twu.edu/housing/guinn-hall.asp>

*GSH: John A. Guinn Hall & Nelda C. Stark Residence Halls - TWU Virtual Campus Tour - Texas Woman's University*

<http://www.twu.edu/tour/guinn-and-stark.asp>

**Prairie House Restaurant** Open since 1989, this Texas eatery serves up mesquite-grilled steaks, baby-back ribs, buffalo burgers, chicken-fried ribeyes and other assorted dishes, located at 10001 U.S. Highway 380. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Dining | Denton Record Chronicle | News for Denton County, Texas*

<http://www.dentonrc.com/entertainment/entertainment-headlines/20140710-dining.ece>

**Bette Midler's “Wind Beneath My Wings”** (sometimes titled "Hero") is a song written in 1982 by Jeff Silbar and Larry Henley. Many artists recorded the song. The highest-charting version of the song to date was recorded in

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1988 by singer and actress Bette Midler for the soundtrack to the film *Beaches*. This version was released as a single in early 1989, spent one week at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart in June 1989, and won Grammy Awards for both Record of the Year and Song of the Year in February 1990. On October 24, 1991, Midler's single was also certified Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America for shipment of one million copies in the United States. In 2004 Midler's version finished at No. 44 in AFI's 100 Years...100 Songs survey of top tunes in American cinema. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Wind Beneath My Wings* - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind\\_Beneath\\_My\\_Wings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind_Beneath_My_Wings)

Listen to Bette's performance at:

*Bette Midler - 'Wind Beneath My Wings' (Official Music Video) - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iAzMRKFX3c>

Lyrics can be viewed at the following link:

*Wind Beneath My Wings* - Bette Midler - Google Play Music  
[https://play.google.com/music/preview/Tphw7bqfcixutcqwmwtwbadlezylyrics=1&utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=search&utm\\_campaign=lyrics&pcampaignid=kp-lyrics](https://play.google.com/music/preview/Tphw7bqfcixutcqwmwtwbadlezylyrics=1&utm_source=google&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=lyrics&pcampaignid=kp-lyrics)

Dana's sister is named Darla and has special needs. The name **Darla** is an American baby name. In American the meaning of the name Darla is: Darling. People with this name have a deep inner desire for love and companionship, and want to work with others to achieve peace and harmony. People with this name tend to be passionate, compassionate, intuitive, romantic, and to have magnetic personalities. They are usually humanitarian, broadminded and generous, and tend to follow professions where they can serve humanity. Because they are so affectionate and giving, they may be imposed on. They are romantic and easily fall in love, but may be easily hurt and are sometimes quick-tempered. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Darla Name Meaning*  
<http://www.sheknows.com/baby-names/name/darla>

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Dana and Stella spend time sharing their personal experiences with siblings that have multiple developmental problems. Dana's sister, Darla has **Williams Syndrome** and Dana gives Stella a detailed description of the characteristics of this condition and the future health issues that Darla may face. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Williams Syndrome | Disease | Symptoms | Office of Rare Diseases Research (ORDR-NCATS)*  
<https://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/gard/7891/williams-syndrome/resources/9>

*Williams Syndrome: Symptoms, Diagnosis & Treatments*  
<http://www.healthline.com/health/williams-syndrome#Long-Term5>

*Williams Syndrome - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Williams\\_syndrome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Williams_syndrome)

Dana's grandmother taught her bible verses that she could remember when she was anxious such as **Philippians 4:6-7 New Living Translation (NLT)**.

6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

This information was found at the following online source:

*Philippians 4:6-7 NLT - Don't Worry about Anything; Instead, - Bible Gateway*  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4%3A6-7&version=NLT>

One **Christmas** evening, a group of friends set off to enjoy a dinner of celebration at a small country inn nestled in a quiet river town. As they rounded a bend in the road, they saw the small, old-fashioned village decorated for the holidays. The lights, like fairies, glowed and sparkled amid the freshly fallen snow. All evening, the conversation was full of Christmas memories and the visions the tiny town had evoked. Amidst the jovial banter and magical memories, the idea for a lighted **Christmas village** was born. That spark of an idea became a reality when, in 1976, Department 56

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introduced a series of six hand-painted, ceramic buildings. The rest is history. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Our Story | Department 56*

<https://www.department56.com/category/our+story.do>

*A Brief History of Christmas Villages from Family Christmas Online<sup>TM</sup>*

[http://www.familychristmasonline.com/decorating/christmasvillages/history/christmas\\_villages.htm#hawthorne\\_village](http://www.familychristmasonline.com/decorating/christmasvillages/history/christmas_villages.htm#hawthorne_village)

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Harold's reflective meditation done on the first day of the new decade, 1990 was created from information about **mindfulness** offered by the following book resource:

Kornfield, Jack. *The Wise Heart*. Bantam Books, 2009.

**Bob Dylan's Shooting Star** was the last track on the recording of the album "Oh Mercy". Dylan finished recording the basic tracks for the album on March 29, 1989 but added new vocals (and other overdubs) for almost all the tracks the following month. Also in 1989, Oh Mercy was ranked #44 on Rolling Stone magazine's list of the 100 greatest albums of the 1980s. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Oh Mercy - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oh\\_Mercy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oh_Mercy)

"Shooting Star" can be listened to at the following online source:

*Shooting Star - YouTube*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3ZHj8bA1WA>

The **Omnichord** essentially an electronic autoharp made by Suzuli was quickly adopted by singers, songwriters, musicians, and the actual target audience: people who wanted to play an instrument but had never found the time to learn. Like an acoustic guitar it is ideal as an instrument to accompany vocals by simply strumming.

Owners did not need any previous musical knowledge or even learn chord shapes. Just press a chord button and strum away. The Sonic Strings (or strum plate) would adopt the notes of the chord. Changing to another chord button

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would cause the notes of the strum plate also to change. This makes it very quick to learn, impossible to play wrong notes and the perfect tool for songwriters who can play with chord progressions on the go. Whilst many musicians dismissed the Omnichord as a toy those with a little more imagination and an understanding of music soon found uses for this most unique of musical instruments.

As technology progressed, Omnichord evolved into the OM100 with a new, more ergonomic design. It soon found itself in places Suzuki had never envisioned. The tactile approach of the Omnichord, and later the Qchord has become an award winning in-road to music for those with special needs. It has helped choirs to sing out their praises, introduced children to music in schools and strung together chord sequences that have become some of the greatest songs written in the last three decades.

As with many 80s gadgets it soon developed cult status, with many musicians utilizing its unique sound in their own music and taking advantage of the visuals when performing. Our cheeky little instrument can found on album credits and on Stage from the early 80s to present day. The Human League had their own Omnichord Podium for live use, David Bowie opened the 2001 Benefit 'Concert for New York City' with his, the late John Peel made a cameo appearance on an album called 'Omnichord', and Brian Eno strummed away for Bono, Pavarotti and other 'Passengers'. Moving forward into 2014, many more artists are finding the Omnichord works for them and used prices are rapidly increasing beyond their original retail cost! Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Suzuki Omnichord History*

<http://www.suzukimusic.co.uk/omnichordheaven/models/index.html>

*Omnichords: Omnichords, Who Plays and Where?*

<http://omnichords.blogspot.com/2013/12/omnichords-who-plays-and-where.html>

*Omnichord - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omnichord>

## Chapter 28

Austin is filled with colorful stories and history. One of the ever-changing and fun icons in Austin can be found at the corner of Bee Caves and Capitol of Texas Highway (360). This Austin institution is the **Pots and Plants Garden Center**. But many of us just know it as the corner where Austin's Flamingos roost. Now these are not your everyday run-of-the-mill flamingos—

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these birds are story tellers. If there is something going on in the city, you will know it from the color and the posture of the birds at this infamous intersection. If it is a holiday, you will know which holiday it is from the color of the birds, but then sometimes you have to know who is doing what in Austin, to understand the story line. And if you see half of the field in UT Orange, and half of the field in Maroon—lying down flat out on the ground, you can assume that the Aggies have either met their demise or will meet their Texas revivals in the coming week. If it is a holiday, expect to see colors emerge to celebrate the season or the event. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Austin's Iconic Flamingos | Austinrealestatesecrets*

<https://austinrealestatesecrets.wordpress.com/2009/12/07/austins-iconic-flamingos>

*Famed for Flamingos, Pots & Plants Garden Center to Close Doors | Wwww.statesman.com*

<http://www.statesman.com/news/business/famed-for-flamingos-pots-plants-garden-center-to-c/nRSmG>

The **Texas–Texas A&M football rivalry** was an American college football rivalry between the Texas Longhorns and Texas A&M Aggies. The rivalry was played every year between 1915 and 2011, until A&M left the Big 12 Conference to join the Southeastern Conference. Texas leads the series 76–37–5. On December 1, 1990 Longhorns won 28-27.

Texas looked like a sore loser in 1990 when it banned A&M from bringing its 75 mm howitzer to Memorial Stadium, complaining it rattled the windows of a nearby hospital. The Aggies joked Texas just didn't want to hear a constant barrage of touchdowns, but the Longhorns had the last laugh with a 28-27 victory. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Texas–Texas A&M Football Rivalry - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas%E2%80%93Texas\\_A%26M\\_football\\_rivalry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas%E2%80%93Texas_A%26M_football_rivalry)

*Horns, Aggies Ending Storied Rivalry | NCAA.com*

<http://www.ncaa.com/news/football/article/2011-11-21/horns-aggies-ending-storied-rivalry>

The **Central Texas SPCA** (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) is a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) non-euthanasia (no-kill), limited intake animal

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shelter, established in 1988. They provide shelter, food, medical care, and adoption services for homeless and abandoned dogs and cats. These services are funded solely by private donations and adoption fees. They receive no government funding and are not contracted as animal control with any local municipality or county. They accept owner release animals in addition to rescuing from local “open-door” (kill) facilities on a space available basis.

At the Central Texas SPCA, workers treat shelter pets with the same love and care they give their own, and that means providing them regular medical and dental care, monthly heartworm and flea preventative and annual vaccinations. This unique shelter provides a homelike environment that focuses on constantly improving our pets’ mental and physical well being to ensure they remain highly adoptable and happy while waiting for their new, forever families to find them.

At the CTSPCA a clean, spacious, and comfortable environment. Cats live in communal condos with poles, window ledges for lounging and catwalks to trot about their enclosures. The indoor kennels where dogs sleep at night and stay indoors during inclement weather have warm beds to snuggle into and many toys for their enjoyment. The outdoor dog runs allow them to buddy up with their favorite canine companion, splash around in pools, toss about a ball or two, or just hang out in the shade of built-in cabanas. With supervision, shelter dogs enjoy the freedom of running off-lead individually over two fully fenced acres during the hours we are closed to the public. This attention to detail and extra effort makes the CTSPCA a happy way station on the path to Finding Forever Families (TM).

The Central Texas SPCA does not kill shelter pets to make room for more animals, and they only accept animals as size appropriate space is available in either our cat condos or dog flats. The CTSPCA regards its no-kill mission seriously. In addition to the standard release and rescue, they are able to offer a second chance at life to many animals thanks to the established Special Needs Fund and Foster Care Programs. These key elements provide the opportunity to rescue the occasional injured or sick animals that others may discard as unadoptable. They only face the heart-wrenching decision of euthanasia when it is in the most humane medical interest of the animal as deemed necessary by two separate veterinary opinions. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*About Us*

<http://www.centraltexasspca.org/about-us>

**White German Shepherds** are courageous, keen, alert and fearless. They are cheerful, obedient and eager to learn. Tranquil, confident, serious and clever, White Shepherds are extremely faithful and brave. They will not think twice about giving their lives for their human pack. They have a high learning

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ability. White Shepherds love to be close to their families, but can be wary of strangers. This breed needs its people and should not be left isolated for long periods of time. They only bark when they feel it is necessary. Often used as police dogs, the White Shepherd has a very strong protective instinct, and is extremely loyal to its handler. A stable, well-adjusted and trained White German Shepherd is for the most part generally good with other pets and excellent with children in the family.

White Shepherds are one of the smartest and most trainable breeds. With this highly skilled working dog comes a drive to have a job and a task in life and a consistent pack leader to show it guidance. The breed is so intelligent and learns so readily that it has been used as a sheepdog, guard dog, in police work, as a guide for the blind, in search and rescue service and in the military. The White Shepherd also excels in many other dog activities including schutzhund, tracking, obedience, agility, fly ball and ring sport. His fine nose can sniff out drugs and intruders, and can alert handlers to the presence of underground mines in time to avoid detonation, or gas leaks in a pipes buried 15 feet underground. The White Shepherd is also a popular family companion. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*American White Shepherd Dog Breed Information and Pictures*  
<http://www.dogbreedinfo.com/americanwhiteshepherd.htm>

## Chapter 29

The **Austin American-Statesman** dated 12/13/1990 reported signs posted around Town Lake warned not to eat fish caught there due to **chlordan**e danger. Permanent signs are being erected around Town Lake repeating a state health department warning against eating fish caught in the lake. Participants in a two-year study of Town Lake on Monday urged extension of a health department advisory against eating fish caught there due to pesticide contamination and called for a similar study of Lake Austin. Four of 26 fish tested from Town Lake, or 15 percent, exceeded the federal warning level for chlordane. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Archive for Statesman | Wwww.statesman.com*  
[http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p\\_product=AASB&p\\_theme=aasb&p\\_action=search&p\\_maxdocs=200&p\\_field\\_label-0=Author&p\\_field\\_label-1=title&p\\_bool\\_label-1=AND&s\\_dispstring=town%20lake%20chlordan%20AND%20date\(all\)&p\\_field\\_advanced-0=&p\\_text\\_advanced-0=\(town](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_product=AASB&p_theme=aasb&p_action=search&p_maxdocs=200&p_field_label-0=Author&p_field_label-1=title&p_bool_label-1=AND&s_dispstring=town%20lake%20chlordan%20AND%20date(all)&p_field_advanced-0=&p_text_advanced-0=(town)

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%20lake

%20chlordan)&xcal\_numdocs=40&p\_perpage=20&p\_sort=\_rank\_:<br>D&xcal\_ranksort=4&xcal\_useweights=yes

The **Texas Department of Health** today, 6/21/90, advised that any species of fish caught in Austin's Town Lake may be unsafe for consumption because of contamination with the **banned pesticide chlordan**e. The TDH advisory reinforces a similar alert issued by local health officials three years ago. Chlordane, once used for termite control, was banned in 1987 when the chemical was found to be a possible cancer-causing agent. Chlordane is not easily soluble in water. Therefore, we can expect to detect chlordan

*Downloadable document. News Release From The Texas*

*Department of Health, June 21, 1990*

[https://www.google.com/url?](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahUKewiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt)

[sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahU](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahUKewiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt)

[KEwiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahUKewiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt)

[%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahUKewiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt)

[%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahUKewiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt)

[%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahUKewiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt)

[sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCgQFjABahUKewiFnPj0rNbIAhXJjQ0KHeCPDAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dshs.state.tx.us%2FWorkArea%2Flinkit.aspx%3FLinkIdIdentifier%3Did%26ItemID%3D20282&usg=AFQjCNHsOrR1g1AmjmUndvw05HF0jPlxNQ&sig2=WvhJmqK3tFPCikEHB96v9w&cad=rjt)

**Chlordane** is of particular concern in Town Lake; high levels of chlordan

*USGS FS 182-99*

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/fs-183-99/fs-182-99.htm>

Why was chlordan

and build up in animal and fish fat. There was a concern that people may be exposed to this insecticide by eating food contaminated with chlordane, including fish, shell-fish, dairy, meat and poultry products. Its use was subsequently banned due to these concerns.

Because of extensive use of chlordane for termite control in urban areas, small amounts of chlordane in soil can be carried into water run-off, and contaminate river and lake beds where fish feed. Chlordane can build up and accumulate in the fat tissue of fish and shell fish that have lived in contaminated bodies of water. Chlordane may affect breast cancer risk is if it "disrupts" the way the body makes or breaks down estrogen. Estrogen can be broken down in the liver by several routes. One route yields a very weak form of estrogen that is excreted from the body. Other routes yield forms of estrogen that may be cancer promoting. Chlordane increases the rate of estrogen breakdown in the liver. However, scientists have not determined if chlordane causes breakdown of estrogen into a more or less cancer-promoting form.

There is limited evidence that chlordane has the potential to affect breast cancer risk: it may affect estrogen levels in animals, compromise the animal's immune system and act with other carcinogens to "promote" liver tumors. Further studies are needed to determine if chlordane affects breast cancer risk through these mechanisms. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*An Evaluation of Chlordane*

<http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/factsheet/pesticide/fs11.chlordane.cfm>

**Birth Defects**—Parental exposure to pesticides, particularly in agricultural areas, has been associated with the development of certain cancers and birth defects in offspring. Epidemiological and laboratory studies contribute to a growing body of evidence linking pesticide exposure to adverse health effects including cancer, birth defects, reproductive harm, neurological and developmental toxicity, immunotoxicity, and disruption of the endocrine system.

Two to four percent of live born children have congenital birth defects, and although much remains unknown about possible causes, environmental agents are an important risk factor. Although information is limited, available studies suggest that depending on when and to what extent exposure occurs, pesticides may alter the growth, development, and acquisition of normal organ function.

A few of studies suggest that in selected instances, paternal and maternal exposure to certain pesticides may cause birth defects including anencephaly (incomplete bone development in the skull), cleft palate, limb malformations,

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biliary atresia (missing or underdeveloped bile ducts), heart defects, and facial and eye deformities. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*NRDC: Our Children At Risk*  
<http://www.nrdc.org/health/kids/ocar/chap5.asp>

**Toxic chemicals** such as lead can increase the risk of birth defects. Lead is a hazardous material banned by the EPA in 1970's. It is still present in older environments (like old housing developments) in drinking water from contaminated leaded pipes. Maternal exposure to lead, which is easily transferred from mother to child through the placenta as early as the first trimester, poses risks of lead birth defects which may include:

- Neurological damage
- Developmental delays
- Low birth weight
- Skin markings including skin tags
- Slowed postnatal neurobehavioral development
- Premature delivery/shortened gestation
- Undescended male testicles
- Miscarriage/spontaneous abortion

Additional information is located at the following online source:

*Lead Exposure During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding - EH:*  
*Minnesota Department of Health*  
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/lead/fs/pregnancy.html>

Chalmers Courts has problems with **lead and asbestos**. As initially noted in Chapter 4, additional information can be found at the following online source:

*The Physical Problems Facing Public Housing*  
<http://www.texashousing.org/phdebate/problem3.html>

## Chapter 30

**TWU's music therapy program**, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, is the oldest ongoing program in Texas and one of the oldest in the country. The music therapy program offers undergraduate and graduate studies leading to the Bachelor of Science in Music Therapy and the Master of Arts in Music (emphasis in Music Therapy). A dual degree, combining the MS in Counseling and MA in Music with emphasis in Music Therapy, is also

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available. The Bachelor of Science in Music Therapy requires 133 semester hours. It includes clinical experience, research studies, and a core of basic music, psychology, special education, and biology studies. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Music Therapy - TWU - Texas Woman's University*  
<http://www.twu.edu/music/music-therapy.asp>

Approximately 10–15% of congenital structural anomalies are the result of the adverse effect of **environmental factors on prenatal development**. This means that approximately 1 in 250 newborn infants have structural defects caused by an environmental exposure and, presumably, a larger number of children have growth retardation or functional abnormalities resulting from nongenetic causes, in other words, from the effects of teratogens. A teratogen is defined as any environmental factor that can produce a permanent abnormality in structure or function, restriction of growth, or death of the embryo or fetus. A dose-response relationship should be demonstrated in animals or humans so that the greater the exposure during pregnancy, the more severe the phenotypic effects on the fetus. Factors comprise medications, drugs, chemicals, and maternal conditions or diseases, including infections. This manuscript discusses the teratogenic effects of well-documented environmental factors. Additional information can be found at the following online source:

*Teratogenic Causes of Malformations*  
<http://www.annclinlabsci.org/content/40/2/99.full>

## Chapter 31

The TWU Student Recital in November of 1991 fulfilled Stella's dream to perform at newly renovated **Margo Jones Performance Hall**. Music study at TWU has a long and distinguished history. TWU established the first university level department of music in the state of Texas in 1915. TWU also established one of the first music therapy majors in the country in 1953. TWU has been fully accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) since 1958, and the music therapy program is approved by the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA.)

Margo Jones Performance Hall is the primary performance facility for the Department of Music. This beautiful hall has excellent acoustics and a seating capacity of 1,074. Located in the Music Building, Margo Jones Performance hall was originally built in the 1920's, and was the premier theatre in North Texas. Artists such as John Phillip Sousa, Isaac Stern, Vladimir Horowitz,

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Lily Pons, Robert Frost, Yehudi Menuhin, and others came to Texas Woman's University to perform in the facility. In 1987 the Hall was closed for a \$3.5 million renovation that was completed in April 1990. Renovated features of the Hall include new lighting, motorized rigging, new sound systems and a stage floor constructed on a cushioned rubber mounting.

The 1,074 seat Margo Jones Performance Hall features orchestral level seating of 812 total seats and balcony seating of 262 total seats. This state-of-the-art performance facility enhances our music, drama and dance productions. It boasts an 85-rank, 4-manual Redman organ plus both Bösendorfer and Steinway concert grand pianos. The Margo Jones Performance Hall provides students, faculty and professional artists outstanding facilities for a variety of creative events.

In addition to the numerous concerts featured here throughout the year, the hall is also a venue for other noteworthy events including official university ceremonies, guest lectures, and fashion productions. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*About the Department - TWU Music - Texas Woman's University*  
[http://www.twu.edu/music/about\\_the\\_department.asp](http://www.twu.edu/music/about_the_department.asp)

**"Love Can Build a Bridge"** is a song written by Naomi Judd, Paul Overstreet and John Barlow Jarvis, and recorded by American country music duo The Judds. It was released in December 1990 as the second single and title track from their album of the same name. It was a Top 5 country hit in mid-1991. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Love Can Build a Bridge - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Love\\_Can\\_Build\\_a\\_Bridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Love_Can_Build_a_Bridge)

This song can be listened to at the following online source:

*The Judds - Love Can Build a Bridge - Grammy Awards - 1991 - YouTube*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znUc\\_Kyu9as](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znUc_Kyu9as)

The lyrics for this song by The Judds can be found at the following online source:

*THE JUDDS LYRICS - Love Can Build A Bridge*  
<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/judds/lovecanbuildabridge.html>

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The cover to the June, 1991 **Sesame Street Magazine** can be seen at the following online source:

*Sesame Street Magazine : Misc (The Full Wiki)*  
[http://misc.thefullwiki.org/Sesame\\_Street\\_Magazine](http://misc.thefullwiki.org/Sesame_Street_Magazine)

## Chapter 32

The **Austin State Hospital** had an average daily population in 1968 of 3,313, and 900 elderly patients were maintained on furlough in private facilities. The institution provided surgical services for residents and for persons from the Austin State School, the Travis State School,<sup>qqv</sup> and the Texas Confederate Home (before it was closed in 1967). An adult out-patient clinic was operated by the hospital, with referrals to the Travis County Mental Health and Mental Retardation Clinic and to various county community health centers around the state.

Admissions of younger patients, alcoholic patients, and drug abusers increased in 1970, and the average daily census was 1,994. By 1986–87, with changes in the philosophy of treatment, there was an average of only 711 inmates, while the Austin MHMR center served 7,100. By 1992–93 inmates had decreased to 450, and the MHMR center served 9,000. In 1990 the hospital served thirty-four counties in Central Texas with an annual admittance of 3,500 patients but a daily average of only 518. Additional information is found at the following online source:

*AUSTIN STATE HOSPITAL | The Handbook of Texas Online| Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*  
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/sba07>

*The Texas Department of State Health Services - Austin State Hospital*  
[https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhhospitals/AustinSH/ASH\\_About.shtm](https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhhospitals/AustinSH/ASH_About.shtm)

Additional information on Austin State Hospital can be found in the following book:

Sitton, Sarah C. *Life at the Texas State Lunatic Asylum, 1857-1997*. Texas A & M University Press, 2012.

In an effort to describe accurate **music therapy** sessions as documented in the 1990's which is the correct time frame in which Stella would have interned in music therapy, the author has consulted the following book:

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Bruscia, Kenneth E. *Case Studies In Music Therapy*. Barcelona Publishers, 1991.

Information on the **Texas Woman's University Austin State Hospital Internship program** and be found at the following online source:

### *Demographic Information*

<https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/DemographicsShow.aspx?FormKey=d4f4f6c9-a460-49f5-b09d-7e642ce1c9b1&Title=Austin%20State%20Hospital%20%28INACTIVE%29&Key=05B97C60-54B1-4D93-9D4C-3FDA21B5EA9C>

### *Music Therapy - TWU - Texas Woman's University*

<http://www.twu.edu/music/music-therapy.asp>

**Congenital Varicella Syndrome** is an extremely rare disorder in which affected infants demonstrate distinctive abnormalities at birth due to the mother's infection with chickenpox (maternal varicella zoster) early during pregnancy. The varicella zoster virus (VZV) is one of several belonging to a family of viruses known as herpes viruses. A susceptible individual's initial exposure to the virus (i.e., through respiration or direct contact with vesicular fluid) usually results in chickenpox, a highly contagious infectious disease.

Although most individuals contract chickenpox during childhood, those who do not will remain susceptible to the disorder during adulthood. If a woman who has not had the disorder contracts chickenpox during pregnancy, it is possible that the developing fetus may also become infected. In approximately two percent of such cases, fetal exposure to the virus during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy (particularly during the sixth to the 20th week of gestation) may result in congenital varicella syndrome. More information on Congenital Varicella Syndrome can be found at the following online sources:

### *Congenital Varicella Syndrome | University of Michigan Health System*

<http://www.uofmhealth.org/health-library/nord1099>

### *Congenital Varicella Syndrome - NORD (National Organization for Rare Disorders)*

<https://rarediseases.org/rare-diseases/congenital-varicella-syndrome>

### *Congenital Varicella Syndrome: The Evidence for Secondary Prevention with Varicella-Zoster Immune Globulin*

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3033924>

## Chapter 33

The **National Association for Music Therapy (NAMT)** was founded at a meeting in New York City on June 2, 1950. NAMT succeeded where previous music therapy associations previously failed by creating a constitution and bylaws, developing standards for university-level educational and clinical training requirements, making research and clinical training a priority, creating a registry and, later, board-certification requirements, and publishing research and clinical journals. NAMT operated from 1950-1997 and saw the creation of a board-certification program (1985), a critically-acclaimed Senate Hearing on Aging (1991), and the growth of music therapy from a few dozen practitioners to thousands.

Originally called the Urban Federation of Music Therapists, the American Association for Music Therapy (AAMT) was established in 1971. Many of the purposes of AAMT were similar to those of NAMT, but there were differences in philosophy, education and approach. Starting in 1980, AAMT published its own research and clinical journal, *Music Therapy* and by 1997, AAMT had grown to 700 members.

The Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT) was incorporated in 1983 to strengthen the credibility of the music therapy profession by assuring the competency of credentialed music therapists. The first music therapy board examination was administered two years later. CBMT has been fully-accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies since 1986 and is committed to maintaining certification and recertification requirements that reflect current music therapy practice. To date, there are over 5,000 certificants who hold the credential Music Therapist-Board Certified (MT-BC). CBMT and AMTA are separate, independent organizations.

The **American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)** was formed in 1998 as a merger between the National Association for Music Therapy (NAMT) and the American Association for Music Therapy (AAMT). AMTA united the music therapy profession for the first time since 1971. Currently, AMTA is the intellectual home of and serves over 5,000 music therapists. It publishes two research journals as well as a line of publications, serves as an advocate for music therapy on the state and federal levels, promotes music therapy through social media streams, and provides research bibliographies, podcasts, scholarships, and newsletters to its members.

AMTA is the single largest music therapy association in the world, representing music therapists in the US and over 30 countries around the globe. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

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*History of Music Therapy | History of Music Therapy | American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)*  
<http://www.musictherapy.org/about/history>

The **Center for Music Therapy** was founded in 1990 to make music therapy more accessible to the Central Texas area. Services are based on the founding principle of gratitude. Founder and President, Hope E. Young, MT-BC has been in practice in Austin since 1990, working with children, adolescents, adults and older adults. Hope Young, MT-BC is founder and President of the Center for Music Therapy, Inc. in Austin, TX. She received her degree in Music Therapy in 1989 from The University of the Pacific, Conservatory of Music in Stockton, California.

Ms. Young speaks and consults nationally and internationally on music therapy. She can be found on television, radio and in print media having been featured on such programs as the BBC and CBS 48 Hours with Dan Rather, educating the public about music therapy and promoting music therapy as a profession. Ms. Young is also recognized nationally and internationally in such publications as The Journal of the American Medical Association, The Wall Street Report and New York Times Bestseller "The Mozart Effect".

Various other newspapers, journals and books have written about Ms. Young and her work including the following: The Austin American-Statesman, the Austin Business Journal, "Kevin and Me" "Pain Management In Older Adults", the Journal for Long Term Care, and Advance (the Nations leading news magazine for Physical Therapy). Ms. Young been awarded the "Harmony Award" in her field for Clinical Practice and received The Young Outstanding Alumni Award from her Alma Mater, University of the Pacific. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Welcome | Center for Music Therapy*  
<http://www.centerformusictherapy.com>

*Science of Music Therapy*  
<http://www.ksat.com/news/science-of-music-therapy?searchType=ALL&compId=115187078>

The **Eagles** are one of the world's best-selling bands of all time, having sold more than 150 million records—100 million in the U.S. alone—including 42 million copies of Their Greatest Hits (1971–1975) and 32 million copies of Hotel California. "Their Greatest Hits (1971–1975)" was the best selling album of the 20th century in the U.S. They are the fifth-highest-selling music act and the highest-selling American band in U.S. history.

The Eagles released their self-titled debut album in 1972, which spawned

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three top 40 singles: "Take It Easy", "Witchy Woman", and "Peaceful Easy Feeling". Their next album, *Desperado* (1973), was less successful than the first, only reaching number 41 on the charts; neither of its singles reached the top 40. However, the album contained two of the band's most popular tracks: "Desperado" and "Tequila Sunrise". They released *On the Border* in 1974, adding guitarist Don Felder midway through the recording of the album. The album generated two top 40 singles: "Already Gone" and their first number one, "Best of My Love".

It was not until 1975's *One of These Nights* that the Eagles became arguably America's biggest band. The album included three top 10 singles: "One of These Nights", "Lyin' Eyes", and "Take It to the Limit", the first hitting the top of the charts. They continued that success and hit their commercial peak in late 1976 with the release of *Hotel California*, which would go on to sell more than 16 million copies in the U.S. alone and more than 32 million copies worldwide. The album yielded two number-one singles, "New Kid in Town" and "Hotel California". They released their last studio album for nearly 28 years in 1979 with *The Long Run*, which spawned three top 10 singles: "Heartache Tonight", "The Long Run", and "I Can't Tell You Why", the lead single being another chart-topping hit.

The Eagles disbanded in July 1980 but reunited in 1994 for the album *Hell Freezes Over*, a mix of live and new studio tracks. They have toured intermittently since then and were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998. In 2007, the Eagles released *Long Road Out of Eden*, their first full studio album in 28 years and their sixth number one album. The next year they launched the Long Road Out of Eden Tour in support of the album. In 2013, they began the extended History of the Eagles Tour in conjunction with the band's documentary release, *History of the Eagles*. Additional online information sources are:

*Eagles (band) - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eagles\\_\(band\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eagles_(band))

*The Eagles- Love Will Keep Us Alive Lyrics - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljrB3M2IEqw>

*EAGLES - Love Will Keep Us Alive LIVE 07072013 @ Summerfest Milwaukee WI USA - YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t42NB3Z1qsw>

*Eagles Concert Setlist at Texas Memorial Stadium, Austin on May 7, 1995 | Setlist.fm.*  
<http://www.setlist.fm/setlist/eagles/1995/texas-memorial-stadium-austin-tx-bdbd5d2.html>

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*Trying to Reason with Hurricane Season: Two Cults Beat as One:*  
*Jimmy Buffett & Sixto Rodriguez - Music - The Austin Chronicle*  
<http://www.austinchronicle.com/daily/music/2013-05-07/trying-to-reason-with-hurricane-season>

In 1974, **ZZ Top** advertised its concert in Texas Memorial Stadium as “ZZ Top's First Annual Texas Size Rompin' Stompin' Barn Dance and Bar B.Q.,” yet this did not become an annual event. Instead, it lingers as an infamous footnote in the history of the Longhorns' field, now known as Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium, which wouldn't host another concert for more than 20 years. Fans did major damage by destroying bathroom fixtures, even carving out the AstroTurf in the shape of the state of Texas from the 40 to 50 yard line. Football coach, Darrell Royal, announced that there will never be another show held in the stadium. For more information see the following online source:

*The Night a ZZ Top Concert Trashed the Texas Longhorns' Stadium*  
[http://espn.go.com/college-football/story/\\_/id/12937247/the-night-zz-top-concert-trashed-texas-longhorns-stadium](http://espn.go.com/college-football/story/_/id/12937247/the-night-zz-top-concert-trashed-texas-longhorns-stadium)

## Chapter 34

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** is an educational right of children with disabilities in the United States that is guaranteed by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under Section 504, FAPE is defined as “the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet individual needs of handicapped persons as well as the needs of non-handicapped persons are met and based on adherence to procedural safeguards outlined in the law.”

Under the IDEA, FAPE is defined as an educational program that is individualized to a specific child, designed to meet that child's unique needs, provides access to the general curriculum, meets the grade-level standards established by the state, and from which the child receives educational benefit. The United States Department of Education issues regulations that define and govern the provision of FAPE.

To provide FAPE to a child with a disability, schools must provide students with an education, including specialized instruction and related services, that prepares the child for further education, employment, and independent living. In 1975 Congress passed Public Law 94-142, also known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, which defined and outlined that all public schools should provide all students with a free appropriate public education at

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public expense, without additional charges to parents or students, and must be under public supervision, as well as appropriate for the child's needs.

In 1986 this was amended to Public Law 99-457. One of the amendments required states to provide disability services starting from birth. The 1990 Amendment, Public Law 101-476, renamed PL 94-142 to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The 1997 amendments of Public Law 105-17 focused on providing transitional services for individuals with disabilities exiting from high school and entering into adulthood. (Shane graduated in 1996, so Harold did not receive any transitional services for Shane except the good will of the PTA women who arranged that the Sunset Valley Gardening Crew get the contract for Sunset Valley ISD landscaping services.) This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Free Appropriate Public Education - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free\\_Appropriate\\_Public\\_Education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Appropriate_Public_Education)

Under **IDEA**, students with disabilities are entitled to receive special educational services through their local school district from age 3 to age 18 or 21. (Shane would have been 21 when he started his last year of public education but turned 22 before his actual graduation took place.) To receive special education services, a student must demonstrate a disability in one of 13 specific categories, including autism, developmental disability, specific learning disability, intellectual impairment, emotional and/or behavioral disability, intellectual disability, speech and language disability, deaf-blind, visual impairment, hearing impairment, orthopedic or physical impairment, other health impaired (including attention deficit disorder), multiple disabilities and traumatic brain injury.

Depending on the students' individual needs, they may be included, mainstreamed, or placed in a special school, and/or may receive many specialized services in a resource room or self-contained classroom. In addition to academic goals, the goals documented in the IEP may address self-care, social skills, physical, speech, and vocational training. The program placement is an integral part of the process, and typically takes place during the IEP meeting. Additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Special Education in the United States - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special\\_education\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_education_in_the_United_States)

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**Sunset Valley has an Environmental and Planning Committee** which makes recommendations toward decisions regarding management within the city's conservation lands, including those toward vegetation, restorations, wildlife, trail ways and recommendations to council for green space acquisitions to expand and refine the trail links and neighborhood buffers.

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1996, Sunset Valley Council funded a **“Conservation Rangers Program”** to train residents to patrol the 49 acre conservation easement purchased by the city. The Rangers tasks were to inventory species, assess the need for fencing, monitor erosion, pick up litter and report unwanted activity.

*Informal\_History\_of\_Sunset\_Valley\_1954-2004.pdf*

[http://www.sunsetvalley.org/vertical/sites/%7B8963FD9D-CEFE-410A-A38B-](http://www.sunsetvalley.org/vertical/sites/%7B8963FD9D-CEFE-410A-A38B-1611D53E7AA1%7D/uploads/Informal_History_of_Sunset_Valley_1954-2004.pdf)

[1611D53E7AA1%7D/uploads/Informal\\_History\\_of\\_Sunset\\_Valley\\_1954-2004.pdf](http://www.sunsetvalley.org/vertical/sites/%7B8963FD9D-CEFE-410A-A38B-1611D53E7AA1%7D/uploads/Informal_History_of_Sunset_Valley_1954-2004.pdf)

*Planning and Environmental - Sunset Valley*

[http://www.sunsetvalley.org/index.asp?](http://www.sunsetvalley.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={3E161ABA-1E1C-44C8-B484-089FFD644194})

[Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC={3E161ABA-1E1C-44C8-B484-089FFD644194}](http://www.sunsetvalley.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={3E161ABA-1E1C-44C8-B484-089FFD644194})

## Chapter 35

**The treatment of mentally retarded** people has always reflected the changes in society. They have been officially referred to as idiots and as the feeble minded. The introduction of the IQ test was followed by a classification system that used such terms as moron (IQ of 51–70), imbecile (26–50), and idiot (0–25); later these terms were softened and classifications redefined somewhat to mild (IQ of 55–70), moderate (40–54), severe (25–39), and profound (0–24) retardation. The term mentally retarded itself, although still commonly used, has been replaced in some settings by the term developmentally disabled.

Mentally retarded people have been subjected to unnecessary institutionalization and, as a result of the eugenics movement, involuntary sterilization. The deinstitutionalization movement of the 1970s reflected a concern for the civil rights of mentally retarded. Very few of the mentally retarded are now institutionalized; most now live independently, with their families, or in group homes. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Mental Retardation: History*

<http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/science/mental-retardation-history.html>

Ironically, the **term retarded** was used to replace the terms idiot, moron, and imbecile due to the fact that these terms gradually became thought of as derogatory. This obviously only worked for a while and now “retarded” is itself considered a derogatory term. It seems any word that basically means “low intelligence” is fated to be thought of as derogatory eventually. So it’s only a matter of time before politically correct terms like “mentally handicapped” will come to be derogatory themselves.

The words moron, imbecile, and idiot mean different things. In psychology, an idiot has the least intelligence on the IQ scale (this now is equivalent to someone who is mentally retarded or the more politically correct “mentally challenged”); an imbecile is not quite as dumb as an idiot and is now considered equivalent to moderate retardation; a moron is then the highest level of intelligence for someone who is mentally retarded, thus considered as being mildly mentally retarded. Specifically, those who have an IQ between 0 and 25 are idiots; IQs between 26 and 50 are considered imbeciles; and those who have an IQ between 51 and 70 are considered morons.

These terms were popular in psychology as associated with intelligence on an IQ test until around the 1960s. They were then replaced with the terms mild retardation, moderate retardation, severe retardation, and profound retardation. In addition to this, other factors besides IQ are now used in diagnosing these levels of mental deficiency. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*The Words Moron, Imbecile, and Idiot Mean Different Things*

<http://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2010/03/the-words-moron-imbecile-and-idiot-mean-different-things>

The definition for **special needs** is mental, emotional, or physical problems in a child that require a special setting for education the individual requirements (as for education) of a person with a disadvantaged background or a mental, emotional, or physical disability or a high risk of developing one. This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Special Needs | Definition of Special Needs by Merriam-Webster*

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/special%20needs>

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**Special Needs History:** This novel spans the years 1969 through 2000. Throughout the Fifties, Congress established a framework for financial assistance to persons unable to continue working due to disabilities. By 1958, SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) extended benefits to the dependents of such individual

**Disability Rights Movement:** During the Sixties, inspired by the civil rights and women's movements, a disability rights movement emerged. Originating at the University of California, Berkeley, the independent living movement, which promoted self-determination and de-institutionalization, swept the nation. Frequently cited as the first disability rights law, the Architectural Barriers Act, passed in 1968, required that all federal buildings be accessible to individuals with physical disabilities.

The Seventies saw increasing attention to disability issues. In 1972, federal legislation established a national network of Independent Living Centers to provide information, training and peer support to enable people with disabilities to live as autonomously as possible within the mainstream community. The same year, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program was established to provide financial assistance to adults with disabilities who had no work history. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 then prohibited discrimination against individuals with disability by any federal program. And by the middle of the decade, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act provided funding for all states for "free and appropriate" education to children with special needs. The new law emphasized the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms by stipulating that they be taught in the "least restrictive environment" possible.

**Watershed Legislation:** Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 marked a watershed for the disabilities movement. Modeled after the Civil Rights Act, it prohibited discrimination based on disability by any local, state or federal program. It required that businesses with more than 15 employees make "reasonable accommodations" in order to include individuals with disabilities in their workforce. It guaranteed access to public transportation and telecommunications, and required that restaurants, stores and other public facilities make "reasonable modifications" in order to be accessible to people with special needs.

Congress passed IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) the same year, building upon the Education of the Handicapped Act. The new law required that students with special needs have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) that parents must approve. Schools were also now required to pay for additional services and specialists needed by students to achieve their potential.

With the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992, funding focused on developing skills that would lead to careers for individuals with special needs, not simply entry-level jobs. And at decade's end, Ticket to Work and the

Work Incentives Improvement Act provided training and other supports to assist SSDI and SSI beneficiaries in finding jobs.

**Inclusion in the Community:** Another major milestone for the disability community was the 1999 Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C. and E.W.*, which supported the right of people with special needs to live in community settings. The Court found that institutionalization of individuals with disabilities is discriminatory if “treatment professionals have determined that community placement is appropriate.” This ruling has led to major efforts to move individuals with special needs from state-run facilities into supported living situations within the community. It has also begun to motivate movement away from “sheltered workshops” to mainstream jobs for individuals with developmental disabilities.

A self-advocacy movement involving individuals with autism, Down syndrome and others with intellectual disabilities has also begun to gain momentum. The goal of this movement is for individuals with cognitive disabilities to participate in the decision-making that affects their lives, including medical treatments, education, work and residential arrangements. It seeks to empower them and to have their preferences respected.

Since language can embody stereotypes, there has been increased emphasis on using terminology that is not demeaning to individuals with special needs. The term “retardation,” for instance, has largely been replaced by “cognitive” or “intellectual” disability. “Person-centered language” seeks to avoid defining an individual by his or her disability. For example, one would speak of “a boy with autism,” rather than “an autistic boy.” This and other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Special Needs History – Special Needs Alliance*

<http://www.specialneedsalliance.org/special-needs-history>

In the United States, **special needs** is a term used in clinical diagnostic and functional development to describe individuals who require assistance for disabilities that may be medical, mental, or psychological. For instance, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and the International Classification of Diseases 9th edition both give guidelines for clinical diagnosis. Types of special needs vary in severity. People with autism, Down syndrome, dyslexia, blindness, ADHD, or cystic fibrosis, for example, may be considered to have special needs. However, special needs can also include cleft lips and/or palates, port-wine stains, or missing limbs.

More narrowly, it is a legal term applying in foster care in the United States, derived from the language in the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. It is a diagnosis used to classify children as needing “more” services than those children without special needs who are in the foster care system. It is a diagnosis based on behavior, childhood and family history, and is usually

## Hear My Soul Sing

made by a health care professional.

*Special Needs - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special\\_needs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_needs)

**Some people are opposed to using the term “Special Needs”.** There are many children with other needs, like poverty, hunger or homelessness. **Family to Family Network's** primary mission is to help families navigate the world of disability:

- For education - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- For social services - Dept. of Aging & Disability Services (DADS)
- For post secondary - Office of Disability Services at university/college
- For employment - Dept. of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy

The only place you will see us use the term "special needs" is in referring to a type of trust you set up for a child with a disability.

Why are you using the word "special needs" when you refer to your child? What does that imply? How does it make people feel when you use it? If it is pity - we don't want that for your children or any other person with disability.

**People First Language** is preferred by many. A handicap has been defined as an obstacle which society imposes on a person with a disability; i.e. inaccessible transportation or buildings, no signage, etc... Handicapped is not a term that should be used to describe human beings. A disability has been defined as a body function that operates differently. It's that simple! It's just a body function that works differently. People First Language seeks to put the person first and the disability second! People with disabilities are people, first and foremost!

**NO MORE LABELS!** Labels degrade. Labels evoke negative pictures in our heads. Labels don't address individuality – they lump people together and focus on the disability, not the person and his/her abilities. Society will not change unless we insist on the change. We have the right to do so. No more “H Word!” Miriam Websters dictionary defines "Handicap" as a disadvantage that makes achievement unusually difficult. We know that people with disabilities are only at a disadvantage when buildings are not accessible; or when access to general ed. curriculum and expectations are low, limits are created for people with disabilities. Let's not use the "H" word to describe people with disabilities!

Persons with disabilities want the same things all of us want. We all want: dignity, respect and the opportunity to participate fully in what life has to offer. Those achievements are hard to attain when one's whole being is

## Judy K Johnson

defined by a label: handicapped, disabled, mentally retarded, crippled, autistic, blind, deaf, etc.. Traditionally, our society has not expected much from a person with a label. This is changing now, for people with disabilities are more like people without disabilities than they are different! A disability is only one unique aspect of the sum total of a unique individual!

No more labels! Instead, People First Language! What is it? It focuses on the person first, the disability last. How do you know what it is? It describes what the person HAS, not WHAT he/she IS. It's easy...just use your imagination. No one "suffers from," or "is afflicted with" or is a "victim of" anything! Nor is anyone "wheelchair-bound." There are people who USE wheelchairs...nothing else! People are not "bound" by their wheelchairs. Their wheelchairs allow them the freedom to go where they want to go! People First Language is right, and the time for it is now.

People First Language to use...

- People with disabilities
- People with intellectual disabilities or he has a cognitive disability
- My son has autism
- She has Down Syndrome
- She has a Congenital disability
- He is a person with a seizure disorder
- He uses a wheelchair
- She has a developmental disability
- He has an orthopedic disability
- She has short stature
- He has no speech
- She has a learning disability
- He is a person who has....
- She has an emotional disturbance
- Typical instead of "normal"
- He has quadriplegia, paraplegia, etc....
- She receives Special Ed Services
- Accessible parking

Other additional information can be found at the following online sources:

*Advocacy 101*

<http://www.familytofamilynetwork.org/parent-resources/people-first-language>

Hear My Soul Sing

My life had been perfect for four amazing years. Then, without any warning, I was unexpectedly thrown into a terrifying, unfamiliar world of inescapable heartache and guilt on the day of my brother's birth.

My parents had promised the arrival of a perfect baby to our family. But sadly, even the attending doctors and nurses were devastated by my brother's multiple, heart-wrenching birth defects which catapulted my family into a difficult world of special needs.

This historical novel begins at the Woodstock Music Festival where my parents met and continues throughout my childhood as I search for my own identity. Can my love for music heal my heartache? What about my brother's special needs? What about mine?



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