

"Faith in Narrative"

By Ann E. Wallace

My neurologist likes to talk of Oliver Sacks,
of faith and stories, of writing one's way through
metastatic cancer. Pulling a copy of Sabbath posted
on the office fridge, he made a copy for me to take home.

In graduate school, my advisor liked to talk
of Oliver Sacks, of stories and medicine, of the ways the brain
can be rewired by disease so perfectly illogically
that a man might mistake his wife for a hat.

I sat in seminars talking of literature and medicine, and
the magic that a brain performs to maintain the thread of life,
with a faith in narrative so fierce that we will inhabit
a Mad Lib of new signifiers rather than let our story die.

In graduate school, I liked to talk of Oliver Sacks,
the disruptive beauty of his stories set against the brutal
pain of the cancer stories I read, that I had lived, unaware
how seamlessly my wayward brain could cross those signals.

Ann E. Wallace writes poetry and nonfiction about traumatic memory, loss, and illness. Her work has recently appeared in *Intima*, *Wordgathering*, *The Literary Nest*, *Eunoia Review*, *Rogue Agent*, *Mothers Always Write*, and *Raising her Voice: An Anthology of Women Writers*. She teaches English at New Jersey City University and can be found on Twitter @annwlace409.

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OTHER & TOGETHER

Kristen Bryant, photographer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EMERGING AND ESTABLISHED WRITERS
SHARE THEIR STORIES OF ART AND HEALING.
RAW. UNAPOLOGETIC. BEAUTIFUL.

First Look with Jacinta & Cyndi 4

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER - 34

Kristen Bryant

POETRY

Susan Wereska, "Textile Tiara"	6
Jordan Donohue, "dirty"	7
LA Felleman, "Hum"	8
Sarah Harrison Reed, "Old Village"	9
Hannah Essink, "Blank Dew"	10
Ethan Blake, "Them"	11
Sandip Saha, "Warmth in All"	12
Nikolaus Euwer, "Find Me Where I Flee"	13
Leah Baker, "Ranger"	15
Sara Matson, "gmt"	16
Kelly O'Rourke, "Lucky: St. Josephine Bakhita"	18
Ann E. Wallace, "Faith in Narrative"	19
Sarah Summerson, "Eve: The Abrahamic Religion"	21
Carol Flake Chapman, "Lying Fallow"	22
John Grey, "Chronic Fatigue"	23
Haylee Chavanne, "Coda"	24
Jodi Andrews, "Serious Question"	25
Sarah Denise Johnson, "Displacement"	26
Joanna White, "Musician's Focal Dystonia"	27
Stephen Herman, "Bringing in the New Year"	28
Lynn White, "The Sound of Silence"	29
Edilson Afonso Ferreira, "Who will read?"	30
Jill Crainshaw, "Vital Signs"	31
Brendan Bense, "Before"	32
Jessica Gigot, "Ghost Belly"	33

UPCOMING THEMES - 35

CREATIVE NONFICTION

Sherri Harvey, "Something Special in the Air"	37
Samantha Reichl, "Modern Love"	42
Allison Futterman, "Flight Time"	47
Brent Livingood, "Orphaned"	50
Daniel Arndt, "Talking to Plants"	56
Joyce Wheatley, "Moss Time"	58

STAY CONNECTED - 61