[redacted]
Creative Writing Prof Montano Pg 1

Joe ~~Rewrite~~

It was cold. New Hamshire had been efperiencing ice storms and blizzard conditions all week. It was early to be efperiencing this type of weather, even in this northern region, which is a picture postcard of blanketed snow by Christmastime every December. Fowever it was only the beginning of the month.

When I rolled out of bed, and slipped into my moccasins, I pondered if I should head into

work, regardless of the snowstorm.
The restored old, brick mill
bulding that housed my business
had part of the roof cave in during
the ice storm. Structurally, the
bulderg was safe, but the workers
and the noise of repairing all the
damage would not serve as an
appropriate backdrop to the
refuge of seclusion my work
requred for me to be effective.
I made the mistake of
working the day they reinforced

~~rest~~ of the wall and ceiling that were damaged. The enormous Waterford crystal chandelier in my reception area shook and rocked like a pendulum, and the noise was deafening. However, my client files and soap notes desperately needed to be entered into the computer. Since the bimbo my husband hired as my office manager kept my client files arranged by the client's first name, it was something that couldn't wait to be

done. So, out of part aggravation, and part hoping I could save whatever precious objects the construction was about to destroy, I decided a ride over to at least situate my paperwork for when I could operate under normal conditions. I made the decision, this was a good idea and might account for a productive day.

I was a natural healer. Over the last forty years, I treated a variety of household names, famous

celebrities, well known politicians, and athletes ranging from elite, to Olympic, to professional sports superstars. I was their secret weapon. I also held all their ~~discretionary~~ deepest taboos in my discretionary vault. They trusted me with their professions, with their lives. They also knew if there was something wrong with them physically, I could fix it. I also reached and communicated with the other side. Contacting past loved

ones and helping grieving families was also in my repertoire. I treated ailments ranging from cancer recovery, rehabilitation from injury or accidents, to teaching at local colleges that offered Kinesiology, Rolfing, and other holistic modalities in the healing arts.

Being of Native American origins, this was my calling, my life purpose, what I was born to do. Connecting to this healing world

was my talent. Performing miracles was generated from a higher power, in a realm beyond earth's space and time. I'm often asked how it is I do what I do. My answer is simple, I don't know. When I perform healing rituals, I feel like I leave my body. I travel to a place where energy, space, and time, or the understanding of those concepts, are different. I call it my zone. The only way I can manifest effectively, is if I'm strongly grounded, by time,

and hover between both worlds. I require the beat of time, the rhythm of its existence to keep my focus. Without it, I can't work. I lose my zone.

I threw on my favorite bulky sweater. A baby pink, hand knit cardigan I had picked up on a former trip to Scandinavia, and thermal lined blue jeans from LL Bean. I braided my long, thick, blonde hair into a cascading tail that hit my backside when I

walked. I changed from my moccasins to a pair of Uggs, grabbed my coat, and jumped into the SUV for the short drive to the office. I was close enough to walk, when the weather cooperated. My business was less than a mile away from my home.

I parked in the back of the establishment, locked the SUV leaving my coat inside, and entered through the service door used by employees, adjacent to the food loading docks. I immediately could hear

the commotion echoing above me from the workmen upstairs. I already knew who was there. I knew all these men well. Billy Cullen, a weathered and beaten old soul, owned the local landscaping business, and he always had his crew, Michael, Matthew, and Victor. Victor clowned around more than he worked. Michael was slight, and well mannered. Matthew was a body building, football player type. All were in their late teens.

Kevin Hall was the husband of the business owner whose salon neighbored mine. He was the self appointed handy man. Kevin had been in a motorcycle accident ten years prior and had not been wearing a helmet. Drop dead handsome, with nothing upstairs, was the result of a bad decision and speed, hitting a telephone pole at maximum velocity. Gary was the property manager, and always on site. And then there was Joe. Everyone knew Joe, ~~who~~

He was the resident town drunk. The building owner took pity on Joe, who never was capable of any serious work. Joe's unoffical job was pretty much to drive Gary crazy, so Gary could drive the universe nuts!

After settling into my office, it wasn't long before the paint fumes and noise became too distracting to overcome. The racket made me unable to think straight. I quickly realized getting ~~and~~ any work

done, even paperwork, was going to be challenging. I kicked off my boots and was planning to head back to the office kitchen to make a cup of herbal tea, and try to regroup. I was determined to get something productive done despite the weather, the hammering, and the headache inducing stench of paint.

All of a sudden, Matthew appeared and began banging on the glass side ~~entr~~ entrance door

from the buildings main lobby beyond. He was screaming my name,

"Lori, Lori, please Lori, come quick!"

Matthew had tears rolling down his cheeks. I leaped up and ran across the reception area to open the door. As I was running, I realized I was barefoot. I had earlier kicked off my boots. As I opened the door, Matthew is crying and out of breath,

"Lori, its Joe, come quick!"

I followed Matthew as he bolted up the staircase of the ~~tob~~ lobby, two steps at a time, like a giselle running from a predator. On the upper most floor ~~of the~~ of the building was the attic space espanse damaged by the storm. The beautiful building in the back was crushed and left ~~ep~~ exposed to the outside elements. Only tarps and plastic enclosed that portion of the roof and back exterior wall. The wind was whipping through the opening as if we were standing

outside. The sub zero temperatures easily found their way into this space. It was freezing.

Below a ladder, lying supine and lifeless, was Joe sprawled out on the cold cement floor. His color looked gray, like his hair, his lips were blue. Matthew joined the other men as they formed a circle surrounding Joe and I. On my hands and knees, I checked for vitals. It wasn't good. He wasn't breathing and he had no pulse. He felt cold. I started

shaking him violently.

"Joe!" I bellowed loudly from the depths of my heart, hoping he would answer me back, even though I knew he couldn't. I started barking questions to anyone willing to answer, as I tried to clear his airway for CPR.

"Did you call 911?"

"No." Billy responded apologetically. "We sent Matthew to get you."

"Call 911! Now!" I commanded as I directed Billy with a head nod

toward my business downstairs.
As I'm trying to clear Joe's airway,
I'm desperate to gather more
information.
"What happened?"
Michael gulped hard, then answered,
pulling the back of his blonde
hair like he was planning to
pull the answer out of his head.
"We don't know. We left Joe here alone
to paint."
Still fighting to get Joe ready for CPR,
I'm panicking and yelled,

"How long ago?"

Victor, always the joker choughedout,

"We don't know? How long did it take

you to climb up here?"

As I continued to try to open Joe's

throat and discover what the hell

was lodged deep inside, I removed

my hand from his mouth and slide

off my watch, tossing it to Michael.

"Michael listen to me, count off, out loud,

every minute. Can you do that for me?"

I was trying hard to hide my emotions

as my voice shook from both my

fear and the cold. I begged,

"Please help me Michael."

Michael reluctantly shook his head in the affirmative. I rifled off orders in quick succession,

"Gary, go to Joe's house. Tell his sisters to come and bring all his meds!"

We heard Billy screaming up from my office three floors below,

"We have no phones! The electricity ~~out~~ went out!"

Like I had a bull horn I yelled back,

"Use your cell!"

In the back of my mind, I was crying. I couldn't, for the life of me, get this obstruction out of Joe's throat.

Billy smart mouthed me like I should have already known, "There's no reception in this bulding!" I continued to fight with this foreign object in Joe's windpipe as Billy's back talk bounced and echoed as if the space was the Grand Canyon. Michael shouted as I earlier instructed, "One minute!"

I angrily forced my voice across
the expanse, directed at Billy with
the power of a ~~Jet~~ rocket thrust,
"Call from outside! Go now!"
I was surrounded by these men
who heard I performed miracles
and they think all I do is nod
my head like I dream of Jeanie.
I was scared Joe was slipping
away to the point of no return.
I couldn't referee the field and
concentrate on the job at hand.
I finally managed to remove Joe's

dentures from the back of his throat. I positioned him, pinched his nose, and breathed hard to fill his chest. A rush of alcohol, cigarettes, and bad breath escaped his cold lips and invaded my mouth with my first attempt to breath into his lungs. I slammed the large man's chest with my fist and positioned myself for compressions. Michael shouted out, "Two minutes!"

After finishing the first set,

I repositioned again to force
life giving oxygen into his lungs.
I exhaled with great force. Joe's
body rejected the intrusion
violently, and his stomach contents
reached my mouth instantaneously.
I immediately ejected the vomit
out onto the floor. Keven passed
out. Victor vomited then ran away.
Setting up for compressions I asked,
"Where's Matthew?"
Michael shrugs,
"Beats the hell out of me?"

He looked like he was in a trance. He was staring into space fixated on Joe. All the color was drained from his complexion. Keven ~~was~~ ~~starto~~ started to arouse back to life. Screaming at the top of my lungs,

"Keven, you have to help me!"

I demanded him to participate.

Michael shouted, "Three minutes!"

Keven shook his head like he was arranging his thoughts before he rejected my invitation.

"No way. I can't, no way man.
I'm serious, I can't!"
If looks could kill, I glared
back at him and huffed,
"Then go get me help!"
Michael started openly weeping.
Between snuffles he whispers
to me quietly,
"He's going to die."
I was thinking the same thing
myself, but lied,
"No he's not."
I tried to be as reassuring

as possible. Michael counted off.

"Ten minutes!"

At this point, I was exhausted. The more I hoped help would come, it was nowhere to be found. Michael started moving further and further away from me as he sobbed and gagged in unison. As urine freely flowed from Joe's bladder and his rectum released unceremoniously, the vomit wasn't the only vile aroma surrounding

my workspace. I was crying and begged Michael,

"Please, don't leave me alone."

I saw Michael's face as he answered. Tears were suspended on the shelf of his eyelid before it broke over the dam and escaped, forming a river down ~~his~~ his face.

"I don't know. I can't do this. I don't know how you're doing it."

Still staring at the watch he shouted,

"Fifteen minutes!"

This wasn't working, I wasn't strong enough. I was becoming weak, lightheaded, and was fighting back waves of nausea from the smell of death that now covered the entire space. The grim reaper felt close. The attic area was freezing and seemed airless. Joe suddenly, like a jack in the box, popped straight up to a sitting position, took an enormous breath in on his own,

and then made a thud back to earth like a rock. I watched his eyes close, and his head ~~fell~~ fell to the side. He was again, unconscious. This gave me a second wind.

I decided to go to work, my work. I focused my timing, my breathing, and I grounded myself. As I began channeling energy, very calmly and gently, I repositioned myself above Joe's head. I ran my hand across his ~~skin~~ neck to

sense the carotid sinus in his carotid artery below my grasp. Instead of chest compressions, this would do the work by taking blood from his heart to his brain. It was tiny, but I could feel the pressure sensitive cells in this tiny pouch as they coaxed me to regulate the pressure they sensed. I manually manipulated the carotid artery at the level of the sinus putting pressure on these cells. My

palm and fingers were placed on the right side of Joe's neck. I worked the area with deep, hard movements. I could feel it as it deflated and then sprung to life for a second. I began to feel his system talking to me. I could keep him alive, I knew I could, I just had to do it my way.

Michael came closer as Joe's color got more life like.

"That's working. That's amazing! What

are you doing?" Michael questioned in astonishment.

My work on his sinus was conducted in ten second intervals until the cells let me know they felt my presence. The breathing I had to do the old fashioned way, but if I had to continue chest compressions, we would both be dead.

Paramedics and fire fighters finally arrived after Michael called out,

"Forty five minutes!"

The amount of time that had elasped from my first reaching Joe, and telling Michael to count, which moored me in time so I could focus on my work.

The fire fighter, who was dressed in a full get up, that looked like he had just come from eptinguishing a blaze, asked Michael,

"Did you say forty five minutes?"

Michael responded by shaking his head up and down.

"Call him!" The firefighter shouted over to the paramedic, now at Joe's side. His colleague corrected him with astonishment,

"He's alive. He's in v-tach, but he's alive!"

The fire fighter doesn't believe him.

"He can't be?"

The EMT said with a smile,

"I'm telling you, Captain, he is."

The captain looked baffled. As though searching for verification, he pointed to me and proclaimed back to the paramedic,

"I saw what she was doing when we ascended the stairs. She wasn't doing CPR."

The EMT ~~was~~ smiled and shook his head in disbelief,

"Yeah, I know, I saw her too, but I am telling you, I got a rhythm."

Confused, and with a joking tone, he shouted to me over the sound of the blowing wind,

"What was that you were doing to him?"

Covered head to toe in everything

Joe evacuated from his body, and smelling like a sewer, I proudly announced,
"Akemi," The Dine Indian language vocabulary for what I do. There is no equivelent in English.

As I followed the emergency response team to the ground floor, everyone was outside. Including Joe's sisters, who escorted him for his ambulance ride to the Hospital.

I had assigned Billy the job

of calling 911, but with the buildings phone lines down, he went outside to use his cell. However, Billy lives out of state. His phone automatically connected to his state's emergency services, and the messages weren't relayed. The calls to 911 were never received. Like a trooper, Billy never gave up trying.

(Gary got his truck) stuck) in a snow bank and had to walk to Joe's house.

Keven ran up Main Street

and my flesh flush against the concrete floor for so long, the tips of my toes were frozen solid from frostbite. And the stinging pain reminded me it was over and I needed to search for my balance and recover physically, emotionally, and mentally, and thank the universe for its guidance, love, and care.

That afternoon the witch doctor and her tribe of misfits

performed an impossible feat. When life is witnessed at its worst, and the circumstances open the world of miracles into the mortal realm, is where I learned love, understanding, hope, and compassion are truly what breathes life into us all.