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Because the Muddiness of Mud Must Be Uttered: A Personal Essay

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DOROTHY ELLEN PALMER

*Because the Muddiness of Mud Must
be Uttered: A Personal Essay*

Eyes rolled and tongues wagged. When we got together, we became grist for gossip grinders, all salivating that we wouldn't last a month. They were wrong. We lasted twenty years. When the man I loved left me, it wasn't for reasons they predicted. Not because I was his senior and married with two children. My beloved proffered this explanation: "We're mismatched. I'm a skinny six-foot-four. You're a round four-foot-ten. When we walk side-by-side, we look like a hockey stick and a puck, for Chrissake." When I noted we'd always looked that way and asked what had changed besides his attitude, he shrugged and left the room. I guess we all know it's a hockey stick's right to bash the puck and skate off. To end his games, I hired a private investigator who shovelled up the real dirt. My partner of two decades chose to stop walking beside me because hockey-loving Canada and the great Charles Darwin told him it was natural, normal, and a blameless act of survival to dump a lame little puck and score elsewhere.

I discovered he had already done so. In the colonial, patriarchal arrogance of all white, male explorers, on a business trip to Argentina, he had hunted down the perfect arm charm. One he didn't even have to woo. He purchased her when he and his executive sex tourist buddies patronized Madahos, a Buenos Aires sex club. As surveillance photos attest, he kept purchasing her after dumping me for her. Exercising his right to natural selection, he had quite naturally selected a tall, thin, big-busted, blonde half his age, one who looked fabulously fuckable in red stiletto heels. When confronted he muttered, "I didn't do anything wrong. Sex work is legal in Argentina." When shown photos, he snarled, "Ok, yes, I picked her because we look great together. At least she can keep up with me."

My tiny, twisted feet never could. That, he declared, made our breakup both inevitable and my fault. While he'd charitably put up with my limp, suffered through me being unable to match his stride, join him on hikes and runs, or catwalk into his fancy executive functions on heels, I'd recently committed an unforgiveable sin: I'd acquired a crutch. I loved it. It reduced my pain and made me safer; it made him embarrassed. It made him feel old. But he prided himself on being progressive and saying any of that aloud would make him look reactionary and petty, so instead he placed his hand over mine on my crutch and smiled. "I don't want you to think needing this thing to walk makes you ugly, unlovable or unworthy."

Of course, he did. That's the gaslighting, game-clinching goal. It's exactly what he believed and wanted me to believe of myself. And he wasn't alone.

*

Born in 1955, I spent my first three years in two convalescent hospitals and six foster homes as a ward of the state. My adoption to Dave and Peggy Palmer occurred in 1958, while I was still learning to walk. I loved being held hand-in-hand between my new parents. It kept me upright. When I stumbled, I didn't fall and would not bleed. But then they began playing what they called a really fun game, "One, Two, Three, Baby Goes Wheeeeeee!"

You've likely seen parents do this. You may have been lifted by loving adults and swung your own toddlers likewise. When my feet smacked back down on the sidewalk, I screamed. To be fair to my parents, I didn't get a diagnosis of "multiple birth defects in both feet" until age eight. Assuming I simply feared being swung, they decided to keep swinging me until I got over it. I didn't. When my brother arrived, when they swung him star high and he giggled and begged for more, I got the message: "One, Two, Three, This New Baby is Better Than Me."

*

It is 1963 and I am eight years old. It's summertime. I'm at the cottage.

In lieu of payment for a summer ministry back in 1919, my grandfather accepted a local farmer's offer of uncleared land jutting into Balsam Lake. The Reverend Cecil Palmer's city kids eventually added their own cottages, populating Palmerville with uncountable cousins. Our little corner of Kawartha bliss—half rock, half swamp, with one bright burst of sandy beach—gave us an escape from hot city asphalt and a cool landscape of flora and fauna on the move: flitting butterflies, zooming grasshoppers, parachuting milkweed, zig-zagging water bugs, sumo-wrestler bullfrogs leaping onto lily pads, and painted turtles scurrying down jack pines felled by toothy beavers. Palmerville's natural-born human animals proved equally agile and at home. Expert swimmers, sailors, canoeists, frog catchers, snapping turtle trappers, and skilled players of footie and British Bulldog, Palmers loved snorkelling with masks and flippers and revving up their motorboats to water-ski. In our yearly church regatta, they ran and stole the show.

In this tall, dark-haired, tawny clan, I was the lone, un-natural, exception: a tiny, adopted redhead who sunburned to blisters. I swam well but couldn't wear a snorkelling mask over my glasses. Flippers and water skis refused to be crammed onto my fat little feet. Fleet-footed cousins raced over rock, sand, and swamp in sneakers. In my worn orthopedic oxfords with slick leather soles, I fell constantly. Exhausted by pain, I spent every possible moment sitting still, hiding in the shady fronds of a weeping willow, shutting life out, reading.

How did I feel to be left out of family games? Ashamed and furious and relieved. Kicking a ball terrified me. Footie looked as torturous as strapping knife blades on your feet to chase a chunk of rubber over ice with a stick. But I could run a little, so I joined the big game. Each night after supper, in Palmerville ritual, cousins gathered at the big cedar by Grandpa's big cottage to play hide and seek. In snickering schadenfreude, they never tired of rigging the game.

First, one of the older, most athletic cousins volunteered to be “It.” Then they let every other cousin race home free, catching only me. Once I became “It,” cousins kindly ensured I stayed “It.” They knew I’d never beat them back to the tree but would break my heart trying. I’d also break my body. When I tripped over rocks or roots, they cackled. Because slapstick is always funny if you aren’t the one falling, the harder I fell, the louder they laughed. When tears steamed my glasses, I’d fall again. As dusk fell, my cousins hid deep in the swamp, because when I fell there, they got the last laugh they loved best. When my duckweed dripping self opened my cottage door, they got to hear my mother screeching at the clumsy, useless excuse for a girl who was too damn stupid to even keep her filthy self clean.

My aunts and uncles watched out of cottage windows. Curtains twitched. Why did no adult intervene? Because it was 1963. Because we all told ourselves it was “just harmless teasing.” Because denial was never just a river in Egypt. My father loved me but was too afraid of my mother to cross her. My aunts and uncles were a minister’s children, but their god told them it was only natural to side with their own natural born offspring. Perhaps in some small, smug part of their godly souls, they likewise found my downfalls funny. At the murky bottom of their complicity lay truths no one articulated: with my mangled feet and bastard birth, I wasn’t a true Palmer. I wasn’t as good as the healthy, rightful, young blood lords of the manor. As a doubly lower form of life, they all had the right to ignore, bash, or dump me as they saw fit.

Why did I subject myself to hate? In silence? Every summer for years?

Because if I’d complained, Mother would have shrugged and sent me to my room.

Because playing and losing is better than being teamless.

Because I believed I didn’t deserve any better.

*

The 1960s inspired all kinds of resistance. In 1972, in grade thirteen English, as a six-time expert on the regimen of surgery-crutches-walking casts, I brought my class to a breath-holding halt with this radical insight into *Animal Farm*: “When the pigs rise up and declare ‘two legs good, four legs bad,’ they’re like all the people who stare and insult me when I’m on crutches. They think two legs are superior. When I have to use four, they see me as inferior.”

This was the only time Mrs. Dewsnap let me down. She paused, she frowned, then made a conscious choice to side with the class. “While you’re usually very insightful, Dorothy, *Animal Farm* is a political allegory about state fascism. Surely, you’re not saying that ordinary, normal, two-legged people are all budding fascists?”

When the class snorted, I heard a pig’s relief at being let off the hook.

*

In June of 2019, in what we had no way of knowing would be the last summer where moving on land didn't risk lives, to celebrate my sixty-fourth birthday, my daughter planned a picnic. Knowing how I missed my cottage she found a wheelchair accessible park. Advertised as all within walking distance, it boasted accessible forest trails encircling a pristine lake and picnic tables as I can't get up or down from a blanket on the ground. We planned a full day, eager to absorb forest grandeur and swim in the lake. As disabled attendee and caregiver, we would get in for free and considered that a good omen.

It wasn't and I should have known better. All my life I've been told things were "in walking distance," that proved blocks to miles away. After a decade as an accessibility activist, I know buildings routinely get called accessible when they aren't. I'm mortified to admit that it never once occurred to me that those touting outdoor spaces as accessible would lie likewise.

It started well. A paved parking lot led to a trail well cleared, hardpacked and dry. But then the forest threatened. The trail ceased to be one, sprouting roots, rocks, and rolling ground. Chair rattling turned to crash, bang, bashing. My transport wheelchair is cheap. With no padding and a sheet of plastic for a seat, every arthritic bone in my body protested. When my teeth chomped my tongue, it bled. Behind me, I heard my athletic, experienced-hiker daughter openly panting. It worried me, because while being fit, she also has scoliosis and could permanently injure her back. When I asked if she was okay, she replied, "Well, dumping my disabled mother headfirst into a pile of rocks on her birthday isn't my definition of a picnic."

Then we fell silent. Fearing injury to each other, every second required eyes-glued-to-ground navigation of obstacles ahead. We saw no trees or wildflowers. All sensible fauna had long run from the unnatural, two-headed creature clanking like the Tin Man of Oz. We debated turning around but, making this English teacher proud, my daughter decided that, like Macbeth, she was so steeped in sweat that going forward would stink as much as going back.

It wasn't. My front wheel smacked a chunk of pink granite, jarring my daughter's hands from the handlebars, blasting three hundred pounds of mom and chair back into her face. Thankfully, she sidestepped me. I smacked a tree, bruising my spine. Had it broken my chair or thrown me from it, it would have broken bones and worse, left us marooned.

In a final humiliation, a grinning young Sir Galahad galloped into view. Built like the brawniest of brick shithouses, he didn't see adult women; he saw damsels in distress. Instantly concluding we couldn't handle the trail, he grabbed my chair unasked, taking it as his Darwin-given, hunky male right to push me back to where he knew I belonged. We never saw the lake. We did find a cigarette-scarred, birdshit-speckled picnic table beside the parking lot.

Happy Birthday to me. To this day, whenever I hear Joni Mitchell sing, "They paved paradise and put up a parking lot," I reply, "It's only paradise to those who get to see it. Please pave every fucking inch of it. Then I'll finally have equal access to the world."

*

Along with my years as a union rep, the greatest joy and pleasure of my life comes from my decades as a drama teacher creating the art of improvisation with teenagers. It's where I learned to write. Improv is the storytelling craft of inspiration, recursion, and rethreading, where every suggestion includes its opposite. Let's say the audience provides the suggestion *green*. Exploring denotation and connotation, it inspires nature, natural, organic, healthy, grass, hills, eco-friendly, naivety, jealousy, greed, Kermit the frog, Greenpeace, and the rebirth of spring. *Green* also evokes its opposites: unnatural, unhealthy, human-made, roads, sidewalks, pavement, deforestation, desertification, pollution, climate crisis, winter, and death. Improvisors "look, look, and look again" and explore them all.

When I read the call for this journal issue, my improvising brain rejoiced. *Moving On Land* inspired the modes of locomotion I've embodied for seven decades. Crawled until three. Swam before I could walk. Used crutches and walking casts. Limped in all my life. Denied limping most of my life. As I aged, I needed a crutch, then a walker and wheelchair, and now my red mobility scooter. When I ride Rosie, I'm scooting in diapers, scooting while fat, scooting while diabetic, scooting while deaf in one ear and HOH (hard-of-hearing) in the other, scooting while depressed, scooting with no one beside me, and scooting with the least pain and most freedom I've had in years.

The call offered even better inspiration in its opposites. No one but the Marquis de Sade, or perhaps the self-appointed Goddess of Goop, Gwyneth Paltrow, would ever prescribe me "a daily walk for mental well-being." For me, there's no such thing as "purposeless walking." It's as eye-rolling impossible as the ubiquitously insulting advice to "just go on a simple walk." I must plan, execute, count, and pay for every step. Especially in winter, I'm the opposite of *moving*: frozen, immobile, stuck, inactive, and entrapped, grounded by all the systemic, material, and attitudinal barriers that limit movement in both natural and built environments.

In Canada, *land* evokes both "strong and free" and stolen. "Back to the land" is a settler opposite to "land back." In further contradiction, as a disabled, adopted, atheist, I have a conflicted relationship with many of the conventionally positive connotations of land. Mother Earth is seen as nurturing, welcoming, and kind. Loving the land as our heartfelt home is natural, normal, healthy, pleasurable, spiritual, and worshipful. For me, these assumptions are othering and harmful. Like my mother, Mother Earth is not my natural home. Neither have ever been nurturing. Walking on land is unnatural. *Terra firma*, in all its forms, sides firmly against me. Land is my humiliator, my unwelcoming and unkindly home, an increasingly unsafe space to land.

Simply put, the land is my enemy. I know how out of step this makes me. For intertwined reasons political, recreational, medical, religious, ecological, spiritual, poetic, and artistic, few will choose to walk beside me. Should I even bother submitting to this issue?

I had to look, look, and look again to say yes. I did see myself in this question: "Who gets to move or pass through some kinds of spaces and who does not, and how do we dismantle, challenge, or otherwise reckon with constraints, laws, prejudices, gradations of privilege and sustained social injustices...?" It heartened me to see the word *disabled*, if mentioned only once

and generically. Of course, moving while Blind, moving while Deaf/deaf, moving while neurodivergent, moving while mentally ill, moving while intellectually disabled, moving while immune-compromised, or moving while chronically ill, all are uniquely different marginalized lived experiences, not just “practices,” “perspectives,” or “ways of knowing.”

Who gets to write about *Moving on Land*? Those who can access land in the first place and those whose voice is welcome in CanLit. Disabled seniors are often excluded on both counts. Time after time, impeccably-worded calls for journal issues, contests, and anthologies ask for “diversity”—and then appear with zero disabled or senior writers. Young, abled diversity isn’t diversity. It’s just better-looking exclusion. In representative diversity, 23% of authors in all publications would be disabled and 28% would be seniors. CanLit congratulates itself for including even one token disabled writer and ignores the predictably performative, self-serving pattern of those they select. “Good crips,” the younger and more ambulatory the better, all of the polite, unchallenging, Tiny Tim ilk, are chosen because they limit themselves to artfully and endlessly describing individual, personal experience. They might mention exclusion but never accuse anyone of it nor demand its redress. CanLit offers little ground to “bad crips,” those who use lived experience and the intersectional principles of Disability Justice to loudly demand both systemic change and individual accountability.

Fearing exclusion, I admit that this bad crip memorized all nine bullet points of this issue’s call vowing to include them all. It didn’t work. It made me doubt my own words were good enough. The ninth bullet fired full force into my insecurity: “Consider the politics of joy and pleasure in walking/locomotion.” What joy? What pleasure? While *disabled joy* is currently a hot topic in CanLit and can radically resist the stereotype of disabled lives as joyless, I’m suspicious of joy as exactly the diversionary, feel-good, palatable pap abled people want good crip writers to focus on. It’s an extraordinary act of abled privilege to assume movement ever includes any joy or pleasure. It offers many the opposite: anxiety, pain, fear, and shame. Now that I can no longer drive or take transit, even my most pleasurable mode of locomotion comes with joy-killing baggage. On Rosie, I’m clearly moving on land. I move bystanders to pity smiles and some really nasty improv. Inspired by their conviction that my immobility must be my own fat, lazy fault, superior bi-pedal pedestrians hurl fatphobic insults in my face.

But my biggest concern, what made me give up several times, fearing this essay a self-flagellating, pointless, painful, waste of time, wasn’t any of the words in the call nor any I’ve used so far. It’s the opposite. It’s what was not uttered, the telling absence of two little words. Before I use them, I want to explore their origins. Hate always has history.

*

My first degree is in nineteenth-century social history. I’m fascinated by how abled, middle-class, middle-aged, white, urban, Victorian men still reach from the grave to warp our thinking. In 1843, when Charles Dickens penned *A Christmas Carol*, he created what most call a sweet tale for children. Which children? Tiny Tim, the archetypal, angelic, good cripple is abled capitalism’s wet dream: grateful, non-critical, accepting of pain and poverty, ready to die obligingly. When Tiny Tim tires on the cobblestones of Camden Town and Bob Cratchit lifts his

little lame son up on manly shoulders, abled readers see kind parental love. I see patriarchal patronization, the very blueprint of how superior abled people congratulate themselves for reaching down the evolutionary scale to uplift childlike, helpless, inferior, disabled people, only if and when they feel charitably moved to do so.

Of course, it's more complicated than that. Like my beloved, Dickens prided himself on being progressive. But he's an inconsistent, uneven, and combined iconoclast, much like my favourite Victorian, P.T. Barnum. A polymath of reinvention, Barnum was a newspaper publisher, Mayor of Bridgeport, trustee of Tufts University, avowed anti-slavery abolitionist, and author of a million-selling autobiography. Today, he's "The Greatest Showman," the "hero" of a zillion-dollar hagiographic musical asserting we should all sing about pimping out a circus of poorly paid, unhoused, disabled people, while dragging them across the globe for the gawking glee of abled people who are naturally fascinated and disgusted by "freaks." Penning this essay, I kept hearing Barnum's riff on Lincoln, "You can fool most of the people most of the time."

Dickens and Barnum both get to be called progressive while making guilt-free oodles of money exploiting disabled people thanks to Social Darwinism: the belief that people are bound by the same laws of natural selection as plants and animals. Used to assert the inferiority of all who aren't white, male, English, young and abled, Social Darwinism justifies the worst of racist colonialism as "the white man's burden." It sees disabled people as "the abled man's burden." It tells abled people it's their natural right to control the movement of disabled people, to behave like my cousins and ensure disabled "Its" are kept out. Believing dirty freaks had no right to sully their inside or outside spaces, superior abled people built inaccessible buildings, weaponized stigma and shame, and passed Ugly Laws empowering police to sweep unsightly, disabled beggars from streets and parks. In the last laugh capitalism likes best, Social Darwinist thinking lets governments and rich people off the hook for any radical reform of society because, like animals, inferior breeds of people can never be made equal anyway.

I chose an ideological heir of Darwin, Dickens, and Barnum—my minister grandfather's very British contemporary, G.K. Chesterton—as the reclaimed inspiration for this essay's title. Wikipedia notes he was a Nobel Prize nominee who published eighty books, several hundred poems, two hundred short stories and 4,000 essays. In my teens, I devoured his priest-detective Father Brown stories until I realized I was imbibing a colonial, sexist, Christian apologist worldview that made Chesterton an influencer behemoth and me his disabled female underling.

I've reclaimed this passage: "I do not think there is anyone who takes quite such a fierce pleasure in things being themselves as I do. The startling wetness of water excites and intoxicates me: the fieriness of fire, the steeliness of steel, the unutterable muddiness of mud." I love to subvert and improvise it, re-honing how to best take a blade to his world. Here's today's version: "I don't think there's anyone who takes such a fierce pleasure in things being challenged as I do. Righteous tears whet my fury: Disability Justice forges the fire to burn abled privilege down, steels my conviction as a mud creature that the muddiness of mud must be uttered."

*

Just because the horse has left the barn, doesn't give anyone permission to shrug and let it run amok in the streets. We all benefit from collecting it. It's profoundly unprincipled to pretend there is no horse and no harm. Accordingly, in 2023, I can't write about *Moving on Land* without using the two words that currently control all human movement: *ableism* and *pandemic*. Uttering them empowers me to face a question unanswered for half a century.

"Yes, Mrs. Dewsnap, that's exactly what I think. Ableism is one of the most successful propaganda tools of capitalism precisely because it creates hate-based hierarchies that teach us to compete, not coexist. As a disabled senior struggling to survive a global pandemic, I've watched ableism turn ordinary people into budding fascists. I've seen how quickly they became greedy pig competitors screaming, 'Two legs good. Old and disabled bodies expendable.'"

Disabled seniors comprise 91% of Covid deaths in Canada.

The more we move on land, the more hosts we offer an airborne virus, the more it will mutate, the more it will kill. Canadians know this, shrug, and go to hockey games. With half a left lung and a repaired heart, for me, Covid would definitely be a death sentence. For four years, I've tried, and will never stop trying, to save my life and not kill anyone else.

When Covid struck, I didn't leave my apartment for eighteen months. Today, vaccinated and always N95 masked, I hold my breath and close my eyes in my elevator. I enter no other building and no one but my weekly Personal Support Worker enters mine. I risk riding Rosie once a week, my movement confined to the same ten square blocks. On land and online, I battle my beloved's gaslighting writ large. As if SARS-CoV-2 can be made less deadly by an attitude adjustment, people risk my life, then call me delusional. Covid denial run amok bashes me nonstop, tells me I'm ugly, unlovable, and unworthy of survival. For four years and counting, I've spent every Thanksgiving, every Christmas, and every birthday home alone.

Of course, I blame politicians for prioritizing profits over lives, for weaponizing the pandemic to usher in the private health care that will make them and their piggy buddies rich. Of course, I blame complicit medical authorities who pretend Covid is over and long-Covid isn't a mass-disabling time bomb set to explode everyone's future. But I also blame ordinary people. When politicians cunningly said: "Take off your masks. You won't be the ones to die," to riff on the astute P.T. Barnum, you can always fool people who want to be fooled.

Even my most progressive literary and union friends reverted to the self-serving contradictions of Social Darwinist Victorians. After vowing never go back to normal, they boarded the Normal Works For Me Bus and threw disabled people under it. CanLit colleagues have likewise guzzled the Covid Is Over Kool-Aid. Shamelessly celebrating the end of inclusive, accessible virtual events, they stampeded back to exclusionary, medically inaccessible in-person events in physically inaccessible buildings. Every maskless photo at events they make too unsafe for me to attend or work at proclaims their smug return as lords of the literary manor. When I told one of Canada's leading Diversity, Equity and Inclusion authors I couldn't attend their maskless,

inaccessible book launch, rather than admit they excluded me, they decided separate could be equal after all and sweetly assured me I'd be welcome at their virtual launch.

Why have ordinary people behaved so selfishly, swarmed the earth with a cruelty they refuse to name? Because, like my cousins, they're convinced they have the right to the game. Because, like Sir Galahad, they benefit from controlling the narrative. Because Pandemic Social Darwinism is the brainwashing hate inculcated as fear.

All bipeds, yes, *all* bipeds, have been taught from birth to have a bone-deep fear and hatred of those of us who can't walk. If you're an abled biped, you resent having to see our crutches, canes, walkers, scooters, and wheelchairs. We remind you that your bodies are also fragile and fleeting. When you look at us, you see the decrepitude that harbingers and hastens your death. That's uncomfortable; you want us gone. Rendered invisible. Trapped in our homes. Out of sight, out of mind. Exhausted by poverty and poor mental health. Made homeless. Sent to care homes to quicken our death. Denied medical care. Offered Medical Assistance in Death.

I won't let anyone off the hook. This isn't just my personal experience; it's the collective experience of the disabled community. Many of us are still practicing socially responsible Covid caution. We stay home. We put off medical care because maskless care is unsafe. We take saving lives extra seriously because the walking world won't take it seriously enough. To reduce our pandemic footprint, we've made ourselves as tiny as Tiny Tim.

To explain Macbeth's selfish, vaulting ambition, Mrs. Dewsnap asked another question: "If it made you rich and powerful, would you commit murder?" Of course, we all said no and most of us were lying. Like runaway horses, ordinary people have voted with their lovely feet. They're quite happy to trample and kill any number of people they don't have to watch die.

In mid-pandemic 2023, any call for any art that omits the words *pandemic* and *ableism* has chosen the wrong side of history. It practices erasure, fuels gaslighting, and shrugs at social murder. Today, *pandemic ableism* values bi-pedal lives; brands disabled people "life unworthy of life." We must all utter the vile third word *pandemic* and *ableism* breed together: *eugenics*. We must sit unmoving with this truth: ordinary people who practice eugenics are fascists.

*

It's summer 2023. Like me, my feet Herkimer and Horatio are sixty-eight years old. I'm happy to report they've aged well. Not by the standards of my beloved, Palmerville, Darwin, Dickens, Chesterton, or Mrs. Dewsnap, but on their own terms. My feet finally live as nature made them. They greet each dawn as their turned in, curled up, unwalking, little claw selves.

After seven decades of forced labour, wherein I cruelly pressed them landward insisting they pretend to be feet, they have called a permanent sit-down strike. Far from going gently into that good night, they will meet the final darkness as their painfully protesting, raging selves. Together, we'll take the last move all of us make on land—six feet under it—relieved to finally lie still. Until then, we'll unabashedly keep asking all of you to steel your convictions and forge

collective fires. Because only by choosing to move mismatched but side-by-side together through the world can the muddiness of mud be uttered, witnessed, challenged, and changed.

DOROTHY ELLEN PALMER is an award-winning disabled senior writer, accessibility advocate, retired English/Drama teacher, and union activist. She has published over forty pieces of fiction and nonfiction in literary and disability journals, three novels, and a memoir, *Falling for Myself* (Wolsak and Wynn, 2019). Her children's book, *The Scooter Twins*, will appear with Groundwood in 2024. She lives in Burlington, Ontario with her mobility scooter, Rosie.