

September 2019

I knew I needed to write a newsletter last week, but I just didn't have the chance. I told myself that I would write it over the weekend — maybe while I was having a cup of coffee in the morning? But, I never did it. I just kept thinking I will go in to work on Monday morning, and I will chat with patrons, and I am certain I will find a patron story or perspective to share — and I met Elizabeth!

I am certain it was just meant to be this way. I heard we had somebody new in our Respite program who is an amazing poet; she had even been published! So, I went to see if Elizabeth was around. I knocked on the door of the female Respite dorm, feeling bad about intruding in the morning, coming with a request for something from somebody I have never met. It felt very selfish.

I asked Elizabeth about her poetry and explained that I wanted to read it and possibly share it in our newsletter. She was happy to share her writing with me. We agreed it was meant to be. Her poems are so raw and sad, and yet also so hopeful. For example, she wrote a poem to her children about her PTSD. It was so powerful how she exposed her deepest guilt, willing to be so vulnerable for the world to see. She is haunted by a sense of profound and deep empathy for others. If you want to read it, it is published in InRoads 22, an anthology of creative writing from EWU's Writers in the Community program.



Heather with author and Respite client Elizabeth.

Elizabeth also wrote this poem, full of pain, but also of hope:

SIGHT

“Oh Sorry! Just laughing my head off, enjoying the day

As well as well can be expected

Put your best foot forward, act as if

And fake it till you make it.

My spirit is young; I want to enjoy my life

But sadly my body is and full of pain & strife

But yet I can see- A sunset and a squirrel in a tree.

Because I know the real of me, My Father gave me eyes to see;

Your pain is sacred. Your pain is your own. I'm sorry for your pain.”

Elizabeth's caregiver came to visit her at the shelter this morning. She stated that it is hard to have a caregiver assist you when you don't have a home. Please pray for a housing solution for Elizabeth.

Sincerely,

Heather Schleigh,
Director, House of Charity

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