

time. I know that unlike Michael, who can grieve in the moment, my loss of Sally will grow slowly, each day her lilted spirit fails to cross our threshold.

As Michael and I drive through the dark night, we talk about Sally. The heartwrencher for him was the little musical bear, the one given to Sally when she was two. The bear hung around her bedpost and at night we would pull the chain and soft music would play. As we settled Sally into her room we found it in one of the boxes.

“Why would she bring that?” Michael asks.

I look at Michael and feel deep sorrow that Kent could not be part of our life and family, and that I hadn't been strong enough to keep him.

I think of our daughter, left behind to start her new life in Montreal. I think of my other child, left behind there so many years ago. I realize the journey of life is a continual process of letting go, and that I can do it in fear or with grace, possibly even courage. I have much work to do.

Debbie Rolfe is a writer who lives in Toronto with her husband and family.

RITA CRAIG

From A to C

I disposed of almost everyone
From A to C the other day
I was short of filing space
So I decided to go through my chemo files
I threw away the files of all the people
I'd sent to palliative care units
Those that the computer told me
Had died in my own hospital
And those who just seemed to
Disappear

But when I got to C
I lost my stomach for the whole thing
I stopped - and never returned to this task
Even when I moved to another job

Rita Wilder Craig is a social worker currently working in inpatient mental health in an acute care community hospital in metropolitan Toronto. She has been writing “narratives of social work” for a number of years. She received her social work education at both York University and the University of Toronto.

ADELE GRAF

Greek island legacy

my grandmother returns to me each spring, reborn
as the season wakes –
I find her where wildflowers bloom, even on the
high path
atop the bastioned walls of Rhodes, amidst

airy Queen Anne's Lace, swaying on slim
stems
bunches of perky vermilion poppies
daisies, fields of them, their yellow spilling onto
petalled whites

once these flowers took her back to the meadows
of her youth
now they remind me of my sun-filled youth
with her –
she enfolded me as these walls unfold this
town

till alone one night she faded at her season's
end, then
bequeathed her presence in this wealth of wild
array
whose blossoms bow to welcome her again

today she stays near me, holding sunlight in
her eyes
as Queen Anne's Lace holds light within its wide
white cluster
her smile, like polished poppies, gladdens

this ancient path generations have worn
smooth–
even now, our fingers touch as she helps me braid
a daisy chain
for my own granddaughter's hair

After working as a government writer, Adele Graf is happy to be writing poetry and short fiction for herself. Adele's poems have been published in Bywords Quarterly Journal and in several anthologies. Adele lives in Ottawa, where she devotes her time to writing, singing, her family and her cats.