



**Volunteer Art Share November and December 2020**



Red=How ME feels  
Blue=How I practice feeling  
Elizabeth Brooks, Acrylic, 2019



## Just Another Day

I'm angry I'm sad.  
One day I reach out, to live to engage  
I say thank you yes, I'm doing pretty good.  
And then as if the devil was listening in  
it all falls apart. I'm in bed again

A fever, no that only lasted a minute  
Actually 96.5 is the reading  
I'm swallowing thumbtacks, no wait, there's nothing there  
I cough and feel I am hurting myself.  
But coughing comes, choking starts

Green gobs come up, oh that's good.  
I'm a mensch to ensure others don't see me in pain.  
But wait, it's dishonest, a secret. They should know  
Only if they have to; I will miss this and that, cancel what needs to be canceled  
But I just saw you yesterday and you were doing great.  
And...? What shall I say?

Is it true that my body punishes me  
for wanting to be alive?  
Is it true that I am the cause of my suffering?  
Surely there is no one else.  
Surely it is not random though for decades it appeared to be  
Surely so much more is known now, right?  
Surely help is coming.  
I hate this fucking illness. But so what.

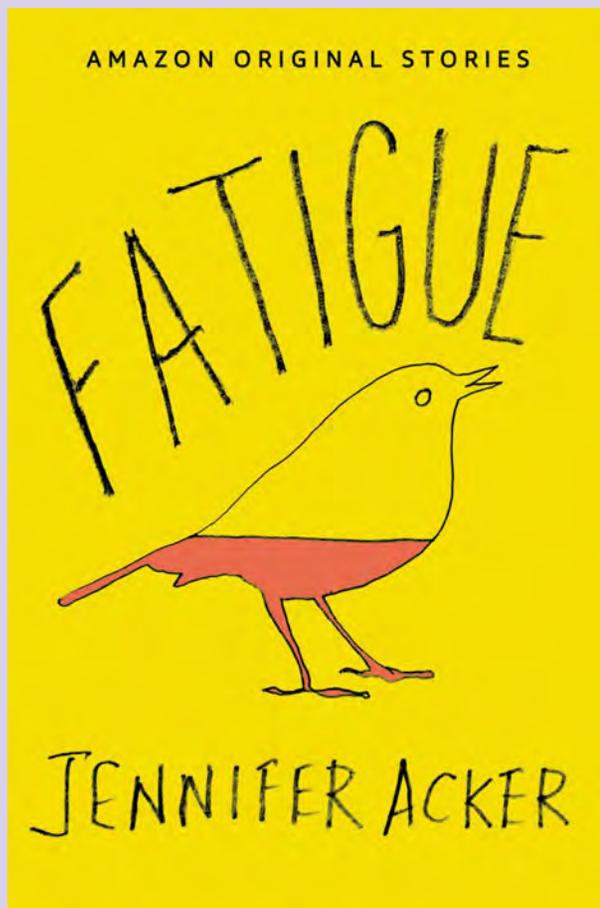
There is much to hate in the pains we all suffer. Why burden you with  
mine.  
I stare. The birds fly. They land, they eat. I stare.  
It comes when it chooses and leaves when it's done.  
Done taking what I wish for.  
I long to rely on myself. It takes that.  
Face a challenge; push through an obstacle.  
No, it takes that too.  
Run, breath, feel power in my veins.  
Feel alive. Do, act, make things happen.  
No. That is a cruel joke.  
Initiative has dire consequences.

prc  
February, 2017



Jehan, "The dark and the light"  
Paintings, 2019





## Jennifer Acker, Short Story, 2019

### “Fatigue”

*An inspiring true story about the twists of fate that challenge a couple’s expectations of love, marriage, and reliance.*

Jennifer Acker and her husband had been married for eleven years when she was blindsided by a mysterious and undiagnosed incapacitation. Accustomed to their independent routines, they will have to reform both their lives to accommodate the enervating illness. As Jennifer’s sense of self falls away, however, the couple is struck again. Her husband’s “frozen shoulder” all but locks one side of his upper body, leaving him in excruciating pain, partially immobilized, and as dependent on Jennifer as she is on him. But their needs are not in competition. In communion and reciprocal caregiving, they learn to love—and to explore—each other anew.

#### *About the Author*

Jennifer Acker is the author of the debut novel *The Limits of the World*, and she is the founder and editor in chief of *The Common*. Her short stories, essays, translations, and reviews have appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Literary Hub*, *n+1*, *Guernica*, the *Yale Review*, *Off Assignment*, and *Ploughshares*, among other publications. Acker has an MFA from the Bennington Writing Seminars

and teaches writing and editing at Amherst College, where she directs the Literary Publishing Internship and LitFest. She lives in western Massachusetts with her husband. For more information, visit [www.jenniferacker.com](http://www.jenniferacker.com)

*Free with Amazon Prime, \$1.99 to buy*

[https://www.amazon.com/Fatigue-Jennifer-Acker-ebook/dp/B07WG8M9WD/ref=zg\\_bs\\_17403634011\\_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=H8T061N2Y0R63VADHZHY](https://www.amazon.com/Fatigue-Jennifer-Acker-ebook/dp/B07WG8M9WD/ref=zg_bs_17403634011_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=H8T061N2Y0R63VADHZHY)



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Jehan,  
Acrylic on Cardboard,  
2019



prc

April, 2017

## “Coulda Woulda Shoulda”

Couda Woulda Shoulda

Let it go

Coulda Woulda Shoulda

once was good

Coulda Woulda Shoulda

when I could

Coulda Woulda Shoulda

not too late

Coulda Woulda Shoulda

learn and change

Coulda Woulda Shoulda

now remain

Coulda Woulda Shoulda

I don't know