

few days a week. I'll try to live with Louise. I should have done that a long time ago. Living."

He leaves soon after. He stands very erect and waves goodbye.

I doubt I will ever see him again.

That night as I drive alone along Sherbrooke from the Ritz, snow falls heavily. In some places it sparkles like stars. In other places it is treacherous, slippery and difficult to see a few feet ahead on the road. One or two cars have spun out. A good six inches have fallen since the wedding began. I turn cautiously up Park Avenue past Fletcher's Field and see the snowy statue of a guardian angel to my left touching the sky. Whenever I look at her I feel safe. I drive to our flat in Outremont and park in the alley. Everywhere snow is falling and I feel a cold dread.

It is like the anxiety I have in dreams.

I get home and peer over my daughter fast asleep. My wife shifts when I come to bed, kisses me, and asks about the wedding.

"Did you see the sweet table?"

"No, I left early. How is Lexi?"

"Fine. Go to sleep. You have rounds tomorrow."

The snow blows against the window. A cool draft enters our bedroom. Most nights I welcome the cold, but now I feel emptiness. I spoon against my wife's warmth. Our lives stretch before us, but we cannot see the distance. It is nothingness that lies farthest ahead, but we do not know who will reach it first.

Ronald Ruskin

Psychiatrist
Toronto, Ont.

Creative convalescence

I enjoy convalescence. It is the part that makes the illness worth while.

— George Bernard Shaw

Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, was converted to the religious life while recovering from a battle wound. Convalescence has been put to interesting use by many thinkers, artists and writers. Some, like Robert Louis Stevenson, became famous for it.

Tell us about recovery times — yours, or your patients' — in *The Left Atrium*. We welcome prose submissions of up to 1000 words (annemarie.todkill@cma.ca).

Lifeworks

Art and technology at the Venice Biennale

The Venice Biennale is generally considered the world's most important international exhibition of contemporary art. Since its official inauguration in 1895, the Biennale has continued to expand, and this year's show — the 50th — was enormous. Entitled *Dreams and Conflicts: The Dictatorship of the Viewer*, the display included works by 380 artists from 63 different nations. The most recent Biennale occupied three main sites in Venice, with associated events and performances held in public spaces throughout the city. The Museo Correr hosted *Painting from Rauschenberg to Murakami*, an installation of paintings from 1964 to the present day. The large, military spaces of the Arsenale housed a wide range of works, including video projections, posters, sculptures and digital art. Further down the Grand Canal, the best-known location, the Giardini della Biennale (Gardens of the Biennale) featured about 33 national pavilions. Built on site by individ-



Patricia Piccinini, 2002. *Still Life with Stem Cells*. Silicone, acrylic, human hair, clothing, carpet.