

TITLE: WELCOME TO RIVER STREET and other stories

AUTHOR: Amy M. Levy
3305 Spring Lake Ct
Fairfax, VA 22030

amymlevy@gmail.com
202-341-8707

PUBLISHER: Fey Publishing LTD

ISBN-10: 047317216X
ISBN-13: 978-0473172169

GENRE(s): Suspense, Short Stories, Contemporary Fiction

SYNOPSIS: The book consists of a novella and two short stories.

Welcome To River Street	53,000 words
Throwaway	1,900 words
Roses Say It All	4,400 words

Each work is summarized below.

WELCOME TO RIVER STREET

MICHELLE BRADLEY is a woman with an unnamed mental illness. She drinks excessively, behaves inappropriately with subordinates and coworkers, and engages in risky behavior. Under stress, she suffers from delusions and hallucinations.

Michelle is promoted to assistant manager and transferred from the small-town drug store where she did her training to one in Portland, the largest city in Maine. She finds what she believes will be the perfect apartment: close to work and inexpensive. The other roommates in the apartment are friendly and welcome Michelle to the group: ROSE LARSON, CARLSON MOORE, DANIEL STAGGE, BRAD CARLSON and DAVID MAYCOMBER. The apartment manager JOHN (no-last-name) refuses to finish the rented room, insists on late fees for rent that he choose to pick up late, and generally harasses the tenants in the building. She moves in on October 1, 1985.

Michelle's performance at work begins to suffer and she is eventually fired. She slips into a deep depression. She begins seeing a man in the shadows watching her wherever she goes. When she is finally able to apply for some temporary work, she is convinced she completely failed at the tests. She rushes out, spends money she does not have, and nearly faints on the street before being rescued by someone she eventually believes is her lover, ANDEW SISKA.

Brad and David take Michelle to an art show where she runs into her abusive ex-boyfriend PAUL RAYSON. After he insists that they will get together again, Paul is injured in a fall down the stairs in Michelle's building the next night, and breaks his back. Michelle faints and doesn't remember the event clearly.

Michelle claims to be happy as she tells her roommates she will be moving out, though she continues to drink heavily. She explains that Andy Siska has rented her a house on the beach. She gives her notice at the apartment, along with the March rent. She drives to the house with her clothing, enters, searches, and finds another woman's things the closet in the master bedroom. Furious that Andy was cheating on her, she takes off.

What Michelle does not realize, can not accept is that Andy Siska does not exist. She returns to the stranger's home to confront Andy and her rival. She heads down to the beach, following her visions of Andy, until she finally climbs out onto the great sea wall and jumps.

She is taken to the psychiatric ward at the Maine Medical Center Hospital where the bits and pieces of this story tumble out however she remembers them, delusion or truth. She succeeds in convincing the doctors of her sound mind and she is released. She returns to the apartment to discover all her clothing is gone and many of her personal belongings have been picked up by her parents while she was in treatment.

She decides the roommates wanted to get rid of her all along. She makes plans to deal with each of them, and she executes those plans effectively. After she meets TONI CROWN, her world takes a 180-degree turn. Michelle tries to settle down and be exactly the kind of person Toni wants, while living in the same apartment with the same roommates. The book ends with Toni's unexplained death, Michelle back in the psychiatric ward, and the remaining roommates trying to get on with their lives.

The story is told in a series of out-of-order vignettes, each titled with the day and time that it occurred. Some events are told more than once. The reader decides which is reality and which is delusion.

THROWAWAY

In this short story, an unnamed female narrator explains what happened the night her boyfriend DARYL tried to drag her out of a bar where she was celebrating a coworker's birthday. Daryl had a reputation for throwing things at his family when he was angry or disturbed, though he claimed he never actually threw anything himself. The narrator was at work; Daryl arrives with the children and insists the narrator return home so that he could attend class. She refuses and reminds him she will be home after work. However, when she is invited to go out for beers with her coworkers, she leaves a message to that effect and goes to Angie's Bar with the others.

Daryl arrives at Angie's Bar quite angry. After several pieces of glassware fly around the bar, striking other patrons and possibly killing one, the narrator sends Daryl home to wait for her and then encourages her coworker to tell the police that it was all Daryl's fault, that he'd started the fight.

The narrator then returns to River Street, watching as the police try to take Daryl into custody. Eventually an ambulance is called; it is clear that Daryl is dead and will never abuse her or the children again. The reader is left wondering who was really the victim: the unnamed narrator, or Daryl.

ROSES SAY IT ALL

CYNTHIA KING wakes up in the vacant lot next door to her apartment building on River Street wrapped in a wool blanket, but otherwise unclothed. She does not remember why she left her birthday party, or how she wound up in the lot. The next morning, her roommates CHARLIE ROSS and RODNEY COX, want to know more details about the man DONALD FISHER who seemed so enamored of her at the party, but she did not remember him either.

Donny does everything he can to get Cynthia's attention: roses, breakfast in bed, etc. Finally she agrees to date him, and he then quickly proposes marriage. She puts him off. However, when she discovers she is pregnant, even though she's never had sex, she agrees to marry him in a Church ceremony.

It is on her wedding night that Cynthia learns what happened to her on her birthday, when Donny triumphantly takes what he believes will be his forever. Cynthia's mind does what it has done from the beginning to protect itself: it leaves.