

## BEGIN BY TELLING

about the pins, belts and external  
clips. And you can feel  
sure deodorant is not needed.

ALSO EXPLAIN how the  
new butyrate diethylsulfide  
is really a diethylsulfide  
can even be worn in a tub.

THEN SHOW HER WHY  
about all these improvements  
vention by a doctor, its  
and its tremendous  
patented application  
tion so things will be easy.

SEND HER OUT TO BUY  
the new butyrate diethylsulfide  
super and junior  
supply will ship into her pen  
the new butyrate diethylsulfide  
ated, Patented.

MEG REMY

**BEGIN BY TELLING** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] pine belts and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] deodorant is not needed.

**ALSO EXPLAIN** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

THEN SHOW HER WHY. About all these improvements by a doctor, its *inert* *absorbent* *non-irritating* *flexibility* *its tremendous absorbency* *its patented* *which makes insertion so much easier*.

SEND HER OUT TO BUY [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] ZES, P. I.  
[REDACTED] and Junior. It will  
[REDACTED] will slip into her pants  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

# **BEGIN BY TELLING**

**Meg Remy**

Illustrated by Logan T. Sibrel

BOOK\*HUG PRESS 2021

ESSAIS SERIES NO. 11

FIRST EDITION

Copyright © 2021 by Meg Remy

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

PRINTED IN CANADA

The production of this book was made possible through the generous assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council. Book\*hug Press also acknowledges the support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund and the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Book Publishing Tax Credit and the Ontario Book Fund.



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts  
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO  
an Ontario government agency  
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Funded by the  
Government  
of Canada

Financé par le  
gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada



ONTARIO  
CREATES | ONTARIO  
CRÉATIF

Book\*hug Press acknowledges that the land on which we operate is the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. We recognize the enduring presence of many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and are grateful for the opportunity to meet and work on this territory.

I tell what I have seen and what I believe;  
and whoever shall say that I have not seen what I have seen,  
I now tear off his head.

*–Antonin Artaud*

An abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation  
is normal behavior.

*–Viktor Frankl*

Sesame Street is on top of me. It's resting against my face. What I thought was squishable proves to be flat and staticky when touched. I'm an age that feels too fresh for a memory—someone still changes my diapers—but the TV has fallen on me. The impact is profound. Though I suffer no physical injury, I can never forget what I saw. The TV screen is made up of tiny shapes and lines working in tandem to create The Big Picture, like staring at the dog in the yard through the screen door.

I don't know if Babysitter Mom told Birth Mom the TV fell on me (it's not really important seeing as I barely bother to differentiate, together they form a resounding singular MOM). It helps me to believe I got myself out from under the TV.

The funny figures I see on the screen I see on the floor because I'm falling asleep on top of a Sesame Street sheet at Grandma & Grandpa's. Music that sounds wobbly (crooners, I now know) is playing low on the bedside radio. Grandma's solution when you miss Mom is to put her framed high school portrait and a flashlight down next to you (the sweetness of this gesture is still nourishing). I can understand Grandma is Mom's Mom.

I watch people party in a strange way on top of a graffiti-slathered wall. The Wall looks larger than life-size on our big screen. Men who've been drinking lots of beer are hitting, kind of dancing, on The Wall with hammers and fists and feet. Dad on this side of the screen is acting proud and responsible:

*Imagine if you went to the store and there was only one type of bread you could buy or one type of shoe. Choices!*

*Wind of Change* by Scorpions is the audio that gets fused to this memory. Maybe *Wind of Choice* would have been a better title? Both titles make me think Farts. What is Berlin?

On the same big screen, we watch Pink Floyd's *The Wall*. Is this the same The Wall?

When a brick of The Wall, not sure which The Wall, shows up at our house, out of place as a Moon rock, I'm stuck somewhere just beyond my grasp of history and memorabilia.

Our chunk of The Wall gets used as a paperweight.

Brother is in the hospital, gone totally pale grey but red around the eyes. There is a small TV floating heavy in the corner of the windowless (was it windowless?) room. It is showing the grand finale of what is clearly the most important fireworks display of all time, Dessert Storm! I see piles of candy and sundaes laced with razor blades, thunderheads of whipped cream and a general with so many toys that his name is General FAO Schwarz.





*No, no, no. It's Desert Storm, one s.*

OR

*Choices!* Operation Desert Shield, The Gulf War, Persian Gulf War, The 1st Gulf War, Gulf War I, First Iraq War, Kuwait War.

OR

A triple series of **Topps** playing cards, exactly like the sports cards boys have binders full of.

**Series 1 – Coalition for Peace**

**Series 2 – Victory Series**

**Series 3 – Homecoming Edition**

Finally, memorabilia I can understand. I shuffle through them like they're part of some memory matching game. **Daddy's Home, Carpet Bombing, Stopping the Oil's Flow...**

The newspaper issued a large map complete with flags...and the instruction to *Flag the Movement of the Allied Forces from Day to Day*, as if the affair were a game.

–Janet Frame

Vacation in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, with the same family we always take these kinds of trips with, because the children line up in age and we get along. The daughter-in-my-age-slot and me play mini golf, feet away from our family suites. My turn to putt again. I decide to wind up like a Pro and really whack the ball. It flies over or through a row of hedges into what we know on the other side is The Main Drag. No big thing. We have retrieved balls, kicked balls, racked balls, caught balls, dodged balls, served balls, tee'd up balls, inflated balls our whole life. We are old enough to do this.

We cross to the other side of the hedge and I spot the one that got away. (I believe I look both ways.) I start out across the multilane blacktop but don't get far. Something flashes out of the corner of left eye. Body puts hands up just in time for the loudest sound I've ever felt. I'm fly---ing through the air, suddenly silent and magical. Now I'm skid-d-d-ing, exposed flesh kissing and rubbing asphalt as sound returns.

People I don't know gather above me. *I'm-a-nurse* takes off her shirt to reveal a sports bra. *Don't move an inch...hit by a van.* Someone is screaming. It's just my friend she's fine, always trying to make it about her. The sun is beating down on the scene. Cold sweat mixing with my blood, now peppered with little street rocks. I can feel when Mom is notified. I can hear her fear-footsteps landing one after the other, getting closer to what her new reality could be. When the paramedics arrive, I accept this fate. I am put on a stiff

board with a neck brace and I am taken to a hospital in my bathing suit.

Mom and I take a cab back from the hospital to the hotel. I get out sore, shoeless, and road rashed, but really actually fine, physically. People on a balcony somewhere are applauding the miracle. I know that if people are applauding me, Dad will be calling. I don't feel like explaining. I want to disappear into something larger than anything having to do with me. I will never hear the end of this. They'll all say I got hit chasing a ball like a dog. Your story in the wrong hands can be such a cruel poker.