

TALES FROM A SETTING OF ISOLATION

BETWEEN THE COVERS
ESTHER MOBERG

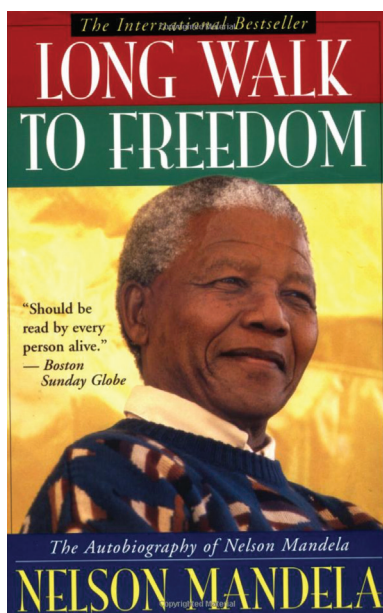


Since 2020 our new normal has brought about a lot of conversations about isolation and mental health.

Isn't it surprising that hundreds of years ago, on up to today, people have been writing about isolation and it's still something that really impacts us. We never knew reading fairy tales about Rapunzel and other isolated characters in literature that in 2020, a worldwide self-quarantining and general isolation would hit nearly the entire world.

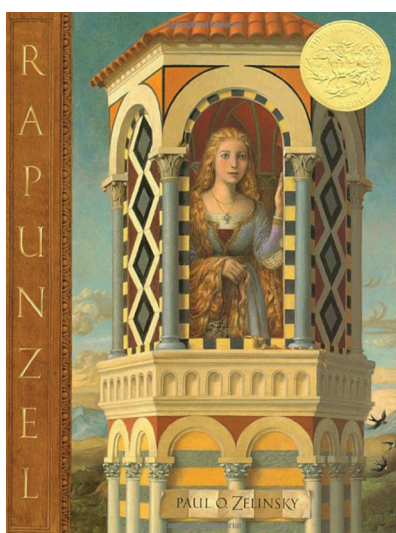
People all around the globe have been affected by quarantine, self-quarantining, and isolation in ways we have never seen before and hopefully will never see again once this is past. I encourage anyone who is having issues with mental health because of these areas to reach out, let loved ones, friends, or your health practitioners know.

From a literature perspective, isolation is nothing new. Digging into classic stories about isolation, obviously the fairy tale "Rapunzel," the girl who was shut up in a tower is the first one that comes to mind. Grimm's Fairy Tales is a



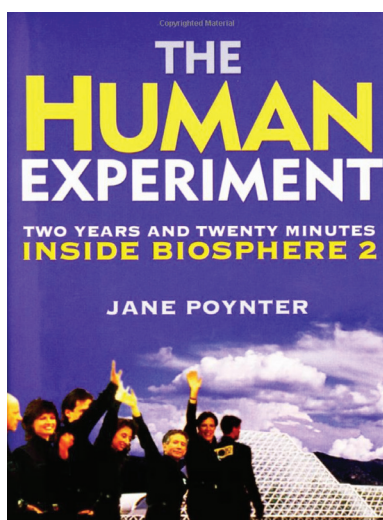
classic way to read Rapunzel, but the library also has some fractured fairy tales in the children's section as well. I personally enjoy the beautiful drawings by illustrator Paul O. Zelinsky. Sometimes isolation is portrayed beautifully. A tower, a beautiful girl. But underneath is the subtext regarding control and lack of freedom.

Alexandre Dumas wrote stories of people who were isolated and shut up. His novels "The Count of Monte Cristo" and "The Man in the Iron Mask," both used isolation as a way to shape the character and storyline of his protagonists; the count, and Philippe, the hidden twin and rightful ruler of



Literature with a theme of personal isolation mirrors our lives during the pandemic.

France. The count used his time isolated away in the Chateau d'If to build his plot of revenge on all those who had done him wrong while Philippe was more a lost confused soul and seemed almost an unformed person when released from his cell, yet miraculously he suddenly becomes kingly and as rightful king to have the ability to run a kingdom, something that Dumas almost seems to assume is genetically predisposed. I'm sure many dissertations have been made on that topic and the twist to this for the reader was knowledge of Dumas' own background as an illegitimate son and his personal



life struggles because of it.

There is nothing more isolating than being on a deserted island or planet all by oneself, and of course the books "Robinson Crusoe" by Daniel Defoe and "The Martian" by Andy Weir are the epitome of just that. One man's struggle to survive when his only hope of existence is himself. The one thing these books may not be able to fully encapsulate is how people's minds suffer when completely alone without contact but both authors do a fairly good job. Of course, all of the books I have mentioned so far have been made into movies.

"The Human Experiment" by Jane Poynter was a real-life experiment where eight people sealed themselves off from the world for

a little over two years inside a biosphere to see if they could survive isolated from the outside world with nothing leaving or entering the hermetically sealed bubble. Food, oxygen, interpersonal relationships and more were all huge challenges these eight people faced while in isolation in the Arizona desert and makes for fascinating reading regarding how little or how much people need to survive.

Overall people do not live well in isolation. However, it is fascinating how the human body and brain handles isolation and that it is also seen as the ultimate punishment by mankind. As human beings we cannot find any worse punishment (other than death) than to place people in confinement alone.

"Solitary" by Albert Woodfox tells one prisoner's story of how he lived in solitary confinement for four decades. The triumph of individuals over incarceration and mental struggles seems at times to be based on a person's strength of will, mind, and what their circumstances are.

"A Long Walk to Freedom" by Nelson Mandela also chronicles his journey to freedom after 27 years in jail. Reading these books hopefully will challenge you, make you think, but also hopefully rejoice in the resiliency of humanity and the strength of will and purpose that people have.

OBITUARY

Constance 'Coni' Wauneda Harlow

Seaside
May 18, 1932 — March 10, 2021

Constance "Coni" Wauneda Harlow, aka "Grandma Bunny," was born in Portland to Conrad Weber and Wauneda June Saunders. In her early years, her parents went their separate ways, leaving Coni with her mother.

Her mother remarried and, due to military transfers, Coni went to live with her grandparents, Milton and Glorane Saunders, in Multnomah. Coni loved those early years, especially holidays.

Holidays were gathering times, when relatives would laugh, eat, sing, play games and have an occasional pony ride. As with many children, Coni loved a parade — bands, floats and all of the performers.

Parade passion continued to grow as she participated in the Junior Rose Parade by building floats and hopping down the parade route in her Grandma Bunny costume.

Coni started high school at St. Mary's Boarding School, but graduated from Washington High School in 1949. High school years were full of music, dance, sports, education and boys! At Washington, Coni met Joseph (Joe) Graziano.

Coni started college, but the allure of marriage brought Coni and Joe back together. In 1950, they were married. The marriage lasted 11 years, during which time they had seven children before

a divorce separated them. Corraling seven young energetic kids was not for the faint-hearted. There were the normal daily activities of feeding, cleaning, dressing, laundry, yard work, dogs, ducks and rabbits that she managed.

And then the un-normal surprises — fire in the oven, hot irons left on the floor, flooded bathrooms and shooting a flare gun off in the house. (Yes, we all made it out alive.) To preserve the house, she would encourage outdoor activities; fishing, swimming, boating, hikes and lots of beach trips.

In 1967, Coni's journey in life took her across Fremont Street in Portland to Margaret Lapray's home, carrying her cigarettes and alcoholic drinks. (Wouldn't you leave the house, smoke, and have drinks if you had those seven little angels?)

The Laprays were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, with no ashtrays. So, Coni's next visit to the Laprays she brought her own ashtray. Margaret and Coni's friendship grew into a lasting sisterhood. Coni joined the LDS faith in 1970, changing her life's direction forever (without alcohol or the ashtray).

Coni was a stay-at-home-mother for many years, until economic conditions (or perhaps sheer



exhaustion from cloth diaper changing and washing) launched her professional career with Wallace Floor Covering.

During her tenure with Wallace, Coni's creative eye was very successful in matching customer's goals with design options, earning her many awards.

Her talents were not limited to interior design, but extended into drawing, oil painting, book illustration, cooking, gardening, knitting, crocheting, needle pointing, personalized cards and T-shirts and poetry. You can also add flight lessons and parachute jumping to her accomplishments.

One customer from Wallace was William (Bill) Harlow. Bill was so impressed with her, that sometime after completing his home, he asked her out for a date. Coni accepted, which started a 12-year love story from 1975 to 1987, before Bill's passing.



Their interests included fishing, hunting, gardening, travel, dancing and golfing. They were also snowbirds. When winter hit Oregon they were off to Indio, California, to meet friends and go golfing in the sun for six months.

In 1989, Coni married Ron Miller and established their home in Seaside. She enjoyed walks on beach and meeting other beachcombers. One such couple was a newlywed Mennonite couple from Missouri. They became lifelong pen pals for over 30 years.

Bird watching became one of her greatest pleasures. On the sandy beaches, she became an excellent clam digger with her trusted clam gun. The beach was also where Grandma Bunny would attract and spoil her grandchildren with treats, card games, trips to the aquarium and arcades.

As her legs slowed down, she would walk to the top of the steps leading

down to the beach. There the older grandkids would carry her down to the beach to watch them play beach games, fly kites and gather around a warm fire.

She also enjoyed entertaining guests, and regularly attended the annual North Coast Iron Chef event at the Graziano Foodservice table.

Coni formed special friendships. One was Ruth Baum. Coni wrote of Ruth in her journal, "Good friends, like tiny sand dollars, are hard to find." Seaside was paradise on Earth for Coni.

Gordon Nicholls would be Coni's last sweetheart. Together they were like "peas and carrots." One without the other would not be right. Walking in the evening of life, they held each other's hands until 2010, with Gordon's passing.

To summarize: Grandma Bunny lived a bright and bold life. She was not perfect, learned from mistakes, asked for forgiveness, gave forgiveness, and was courageous enough to take life's next step. She hopes the same for all her posterity.

If she had a personal motto it would be: "Love is what it's all about." She leaves each of us with this thought, "I'll love you until the twelfth of never, and that's a long, long time." — Johnny Mathis, "The Twelfth of Never."

Please find time to listen to it in its entirety.

Coni is survived by her children, Mary Jo Graziano (Shannon Alfonso), Madeline (Mike) Collins, Joseph (Hannah) Graziano, Rick Graziano, Christopher (Laurie) Graziano, Dominic (Janet) Graziano and Terri (Vern) Jorgensen; as well as 28 grandchildren; 43 great-grandchildren; her sisters, Sandra Dunn and Sharon Jones (Dean Stanovich); and brother, Dean Jones.

Coni's temporal body will be laid to rest at Willamette National Cemetery next to her beloved Bill, while her spirit has returned to paradise.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to South County Community Food Bank.

From Coni to all of Seaside: Thank you, city of Seaside, utility department, post office, manager and workers all; Bob Chisholm Community Center; Ken's Market (now Hamilton Market); Safeway; understanding people, no names, big hearts; neighbors; church; each and everyone for making my life remarkable ... one of smiles, tears of joy and love, always.

I'm grateful to know that time hasn't changed the spirit of Seaside ... a special place on Earth. Again, thank you — Coni "Grandma Bunny"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you to volunteers for vaccination efforts

I would like to acknowledge and thank the many volunteers that are helping to get Clatsop County vaccinated! The organization was much improved for my second vaccination and I am in awe at the massive effort that is going on all over the country! thanks again for your service!

Deborah Albrecht Gearhart

Trump led the way in vaccines saving lives

Im just an old man. I am not a Republican, Democrat or Independent. Yet I feel the need to answer the March 19 "irreparable damage" letter. There has to be some thought and facts put into this conversation. Before the pandemic, BLM and Antifa were weaponized, Trump oversaw the three best American years in a long time. He said what he thought and did what he said.

The only facts in that letter were the COVID-19 stats. Trump did not cause the pandemic. Remember, he was labeled racist for trying to contain it in China. Biden wanted the America opened to the disease. He got what he wanted.

Trump did however pave the way for the vaccines that are saving lives — in record time.

Also, this bill that was passed is worth over \$15,000 per taxpayer. It will be paid for by increased taxes. If anyone thinks that

the fat cats will pay hold onto your wallet. They are the ones that got Biden elected. The rest of us will pay it back through hidden taxes, fees and higher prices. There will be more unemployment.

Then there was one last statement that seemed out of place. The one about getting rid of Republicans "by any and all means possible." Violence? Really? Don't worry, the current regime is on it.

Robert Liddycoat Seaside

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30

Gearhart City Council, 6 p.m.,

work session, cityofgearhart.com.

TUESDAY, APRIL 6

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7

Gearhart City Council, 6 p.m., work session, cityofgearhart.com.

MONDAY, APRIL 12

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

TUESDAY, APRIL 20

Seaside School District,

6 p.m., www.seaside.k12.or.us/meetings.

Gearhart Small Business Committee, 6 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21

Gearhart Parks Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee, 5:30 p.m., work session, cityofgearhart.com.



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Seaside Signal

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