

Chaos and Conflict: The dog and the frying pan

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I am 5 years old.

I am in the kitchen, looking at the family dog, her name is Jenny, and she is a Jack Russell.

She has had pups and they are still born.

She is a dog but a mother too; I can feel her anguish and her pain and suffering. Instructed by my mother and handed the black plastic refuse sack, I am to put the still born into the bag.

This is my first exposure to death; I fight the tears we share.

It seems so unceremonious, a great gulf opening before her beautiful eyes. Enter my stepfather, something is wrong and he is angry, he is shouting at my mother. Jenny cowers in the corner.

In a split second he has reached for the hot frying pan sits on the stove. It is in his hand, he launches it at the wall above me and my mother.

Hot oil and food debris scattered across the air pelting myself and my mother; the pan falls to the floor with a loud crash.

(Note on death)

I have only ever had to deal with death on one other occasion in my life, that was the death of my grandmother on my mother's side. This was a few years later. At the funeral I didn't cry, I couldn't understand

why people around me were crying, I didn't know what it signified.

I am 41 now.

I am not sure what will happen when I am exposed again.

In my bed my mother brings the homemade crisps and shortbread penguins cast from ice lolly moulds.

