

Whatever Happened to Dora Moore?

100 Words a Day for 30 Days

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Roland C. Bonay

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By RC Bonay

Prologue...

From the Desk of
Egeria Milestone...

Her name is Dora Moore. She has medium brown hair and green eyes. She's five feet, eight inches tall and weighs one hundred and twenty five pounds. She got married (against her parent's wishes) to a Navy man when she was 19. She gave birth to a beautiful baby boy six months later. They struggled to make ends meet. They argued. Sometimes he'd leave the house and not return until very late. One night, while she was holding the baby, he yelled at her. The baby started to cry. Dora started to cry. He started to cry. "I'm so sorry!"

Things settled down and they went to bed. Dora got up sometime during the night and went to the kitchen. She got a butcher knife from the knife drawer and returned to the bedroom. Three hours later Dora was found walking across the military parade field in a blood covered nightgown. The MPs brought her to the hospital emergency room. That's the last thing she can remember. Dora's mother visits and leaves her a doll that was a favorite of hers from childhood. Dora begins to fantasize this is the healthy baby she'll be soon taking home from the hospital.

part one - alone in her
own bed



She was afraid to sleep at night for fear she'd have another nightmare. She'd dream violent dreams of guns and sometimes knives. Of war and death and armies of men invading and ransacking the house in which she lived. She dreamed of old movie monsters chasing her on her way home from school. She could never run fast enough and just as the monster had her within reach she'd wake up from the terror of her dreams crying into her pillow as she clutched her favorite doll, still afraid to go to sleep at night, alone in her own bed.

She dreamed handsome young men would enter her bedroom as she brushed her soft brown hair by the lamp near the open window where the sheer curtains billowed in the wind while she gazed at the clouds drifting past the full moon. With shiny metal scoops, like the ones she saw in the huge ice-making machine in the kitchen of the nursing home where her mother used to work, they'd pour diamonds at her pretty feet. She found herself outside in the middle of a raging snowstorm. Dirty gray snowmen shoveled dirty gray snow at her dirty gray frostbitten feet.

She noticed a pack of snarling wild reindeer with gnarled antlers and sharp teeth tied to an old tree. She was afraid they'd break free (which, of course, they did). They nipped at her as she lay perched upon mountains of trash. She remembered the huge dumpsters outside the kitchen of the nursing home where her mother used to work, filled with half-eaten spaghetti, wilted salad, and soiled diapers. She'd awake from the terror of her dreams crying into her blanket as she clutched her favorite doll, still afraid to go to sleep at night, alone in her own bed.

She woke up in the middle of the night sweating. It felt like a hot sticky humid summer day and the cold dry air coming in through the noisy air conditioner did little to towel her wetness. She looked at the silent motionless lump of plastic lying next to her and smiled. She crawled from beneath the damp sheets and the moist heavy blanket to the bathroom. She looked in disgust at the tangled matted mess of hair perched like an oil-slickened seagull atop her mooring-like head. She trudged back to the bed to feed her baby. She fell asleep.

Part two - the escape...



Breakfast was a good time for Dora. The nurses moved along quickly - making their rounds before the doctors arrived. Some of the doctors liked to strut around in their stiff white jackets with their holier than thou demeanors, patronizing the patients and sexually or emotionally harassing the nurses. Dora took this time to observe everything she could while she nibbled at her cold watery eggs and the cold limp toast and the cold barely brown hash-brown potatoes. She usually had a bowl of corn flakes, milk, and a piece of fruit - but today was someone's warped idea of special.

For breakfast, she could choose between orange juice and grapefruit juice. She was always the first person to order and she always chose orange juice. She'd noticed that there was usually a run on orange juice and that they'd always run out. So even if you chose orange juice you might still end up with grapefruit juice. Sure enough two or three poor souls got grapefruit juice which, of course, they hated. They were always happy to let Dora have their juice. Dora and her baby were going to need all that extra juice when they finally managed to escape.

That night just around the time visitor hours were ending, Dora changed into the street clothes she'd convinced her mother to drop off in an old shopping bag during her last visit. Dora gathered the juice cartons she'd managed to save and placed them in the shopping bag. She wrapped the doll in a small blanket she had fashioned out of a pillowcase. She arranged the covers and the pillows in her bed to give it the appearance that she had gone to bed earlier than usual. She took a deep breath and made her way toward the hospital exit.

She made it! She'd been planning her escape from the first day she realized she was being held against her will. She was surprised that it went so easily. She realized her baby had hardly made any noise during the escape. The fact that he hardly ever made any noise flashed briefly through her mind. Once she was a few blocks from the hospital she began to feel a calmness she had not felt in a long time. She reached down to expose her baby's face to the cool night air and was rewarded with a smile and a giggle.

His eyes twinkled beneath the starry night as she stroked his soft cheek. She praised him for being so brave during their little adventure. The joy of freedom was soon replaced by fear as she became aware of the danger of her surroundings. The police did little to re-assure her of her safety. "Sorry lady, but don't you know better than to be out this late in this part of town?" "Don't you know better than to be out here among the hookers and the bums and the hooligans?" "And where the heck is your husband for crying out loud?"

Their sirens blared madly. They could barely afford her a quick glance as they raced off into the dark dangerous night. Dora thought of the handsome Navy man she'd married (against her parent's wishes). "Now where did he run off to this time?" she wondered. Maybe her parents were right after all! The horns, the sirens, the smell of smoke, cheap wine and urine, the blaring rap music - it was all so overwhelming! It was enough to drive anyone crazy. "Hey Dora!" came a shout from across the street. "Over here!" That voice, that familiar voice. Could it be?

It was her husband! Her parents were wrong after all. Dora ran toward him unmindful of the speeding transit bus driven by Bill who'd just stopped by Pat's for a beer or two before calling it a night. She didn't hear the cops and the hookers and the bums and the hooligans shouting NOOO! She caught the bright lights out of the corner of her eye as she stepped off the curb into the path of the juggernaut. She froze in her tracks as Bill, blurry eyed, slammed on the brakes - but everyone knew it couldn't stop in time.

The impact sent her flying twenty feet. She held on tight to her baby as they fell to the pavement. It was dark and quiet. She was lost in a fog, unsure if she was dreaming or awake, or dead or alive. What she thought was blood turned out to be sweat. Was it all just a dream? Dora willed herself awake. Yes, she realized both sickened and relieved. It was just a dream! She looked at the doll lying next to her on the bed and remembered thinking it was a real baby. "What was I thinking," she thought?

"They must think I'm crazy!" she thought. She got out of bed and splashed her face with cold water. "I've never been prettier," she said to her reflection smiling back at her. She decided to take a long hot shower and she realized that something was not right with her mind and that it might be a good idea to see the psychiatrist the doctor had recommended. She started to feel much better about herself as she toweled herself dry and she combed her hair and went back to bed only to discover in horror that her baby was gone.

Grief fell upon her like a dark cloud before the storm. The storm came and she screamed and screamed like a wounded wild banshee. They tried to console her but she was out of control. They tried to reason with her but she was irrational. They wrestled her to the ground and administered a shot which settled her down. She'd always been afraid they were going to take her baby away. She cursed herself for being so careless. Dora swore to herself she would get her baby back and they'd never lay hands on either one of them ever again.

Hector Gomez, the night shift orderly, was just curious to see how Dora would react when she discovered her doll was missing. He'd heard a rumor that she thought the doll was a real live human baby but he thought it was an exaggeration. Who knew she'd go berserk the way she did? He thought about just throwing the damn thing away but something touched his heart. That poor demented woman felt so much love for the doll that to deprive her of that one pleasure would be exceptionally cruel. So he raced down the hall leading to Dora's room.

Part three – banana nut bread...



"I found him! I found him!" Hector shouted. Dora was heavily sedated and, having lost the will to live, was on the brink of a mental breakdown that the doctor feared might lead to a coma. Dora was about to lose consciousness when the door burst open and Hector entered the room. That's when Dora's eyes lit up and she shouted with joy, "My baby!" Dora thanked Hector and praised him as her hero. The doctor, the nurses, and the other orderlies, all aware of Hector's proclivity for pulling pranks looked at him suspiciously prompting him to ask, rhetorically, "What?"

Dora promised to see a counselor as long as they promised not to take her baby away. The counselor's name was Egeria. She explained to Dora that she was named after the mythic nymph who was a protector of pregnant women. Dora smiled. She also explained that she specialized in hypnosis and dream therapy. Dora appeared worried. "Relax," she said, and Dora was sound asleep. She was driving very fast over cobblestones. The moon and stars were reflected in pools of water that were impossible to avoid. She found herself on a life raft in the middle of the ocean.

Dora sat in her mother's kitchen. The familiar smell of warm banana nut bread permeated the air. Her mother served her a nice warm slice on a pretty pink porcelain plate. Dora bit into it and began to chew. But something wasn't right. Crunch. Ouch! These aren't nuts in this bread she soon realized. Dora spit her food back upon the pretty pink porcelain plate and recoiled in disgust. Bits of glass lay mixed with blood and chewed up banana nut bread. Dora threw up into the plate. Is that an arm? Are those toes? And are those little fingers?

Dora was on a table in a dark room with a large light suspended above her. I'm in a hospital she thought. She was suddenly hopeful that her baby was going to be alright. She was still a little worried about the things she saw on that pink porcelain plate. What if her baby came out missing pieces and parts? "Don't worry about that," said a masked doctor who suddenly appeared by her side. "We can put her back together again." He held a sharp scalpel which he raised high above his head. "This might hurt a bit," he said.

Dora, holding her stomach, screamed in pain. "I'm so sorry," said the doctor, blood dripping from his scalpel. "Your little girl had too much banana nut bread in her system." Dora was all alone.

"Porcelain is dead," she cried to herself. Someone opened the door to her room and tip-toed in. It wasn't until the dark silhouette was inches away that Dora realized who it was. Dora was relieved. It was her mother. She was crying. "What is it, mother?" "I'm sorry baby," she whispered as she stroked Dora's forehead, the scent of banana nut bread still on her fingers.

Dora woke up and told Egeria about her dream. Egeria looked concerned. She went off to speak to the doctor. The doctor proceeded to tell Egeria details of Dora's case. Dora was admitted to the mental health wing of the hospital three years ago after she was found wandering the parade field of the military base where she lived with her husband who was in the Navy. Where is he now she asked? I don't know he replied. He stopped visiting two years ago. What caused the miscarriage she asked? I don't know he replied. Perhaps Dora's mother would know.

"It was the stress," Dora's mother said to Egeria. She explained how she warned Dora that she was moving too fast with this Navy boy. "Driving too fast on a slippery slope I told her," she said. "What are you going to do when he's on a boat out in the middle of the ocean and you're all alone with the baby? No, she wouldn't listen to me. So they got married and sure enough off to the war he went. There was hardly ever enough money what with daycare and all. I think Dora worried that baby to death."

Egeria studied the baby's autopsy report. It mentioned that trace amounts of a certain chemical were found in the baby's system. She recognized it as one of the active ingredients in an ECD popular in Europe that had been banned in the United States. It was commonly referred to as a morning after pill. She helped champion the ban because the pill wasn't 100% effective and if it didn't terminate the pregnancy it could result in a miscarriage or the delivery of a baby with severe birth defects. Why would Dora deliberately put her baby at this type of risk?

"You're getting sleepy," Egeria said as she hypnotized Dora. "I'll ask you a few questions about your mother, your husband and your baby and you will answer as honestly as you are able to. Tell me what you remember before you lost the baby?" Dora winced.

She remembered she was angry that her mother was not able to accept the fact that she was pregnant and in love with Tony and that they were planning to have a baby and get married. "How are you going to raise a family," asked her mother. Dora said they would find a way.

She remembered feeling very sick during the pregnancy. She went to the doctor who discovered traces of chemicals in her bloodstream that were used in "morning after pills" as a post-coital emergency contraceptive device. She discovered that her mother had replaced her anti-depression pills with the ECD pills. She confronted her mother. They fought. Dora was hospitalized. Egeria mentioned this to Dora's mother and the doctor. Dora's mother was livid. "I knew you were up to something!" Dora's mother spat at Egeria. "You're not even a real psychiatrist! I demand that this charlatan be removed from my daughter's case immediately!"

Part four - memory lane...



The hospital investigated the allegations against Egeria and found them to be true. She was not licensed by the state to practice psychiatry. Dora's mother grinned triumphantly as Hector Gomez escorted Egeria out of the building. "I just want you to know I thought what you was doing was helping Dora," he said as he placed a box of her files and things in the trunk of her car. "Thank you," she replied. "Would you do me a big favor?" she asked. "Sure," he replied. She handed him her card. "Let me know how she's doing in a few days."

Dora's dreams become more vivid and very intense. Every night, the same dream, over and over again. She's driving a car at night. She's eating banana nut bread in her mother's kitchen. She's in the hospital. Her belly's on fire. Her baby is dead. And each time - she wakes up - her heart racing - she finds him safe and sound. "That's it! Why didn't I see it before? My mother is planning to take my baby!" Dora woke up to find her mother standing next to her bed holding her baby. "You're not taking him away from me!"

Dora grabs the doll's little plastic arm and pulls it from its little plastic socket. What? No blood. No scream of pain. No cry for mommy. How can that be? Dora collapses into a state of shock. She has lost her will to live. They fear, once again, that Dora may slip into a coma. Hector tells Egeria what happened. He sneaks her into the hospital. She connects with Dora's unconscious mind and they talk about everything that has happened in Dora's life from the time that she was just a little girl all the way up to the miscarriage.

Dora's mother was sleeping with her man. She drove to her house one rainy night and found them, nearly naked, in the kitchen. A plate of freshly baked banana nut bread was on the counter. And a knife. She picked up the plate and flung it at them. It crashed into the wall breaking into several pieces. Dora ran into the bathroom and locked the door behind her. She read the label on a jar of pills. She took some. She went back to the kitchen and vomited. Her stomach hurt. They drove her to the hospital where she miscarried.

Dora woke up feeling better than she ever remembered. She decided she didn't need to be in the hospital any longer. She showered and fixed her hair. She got dressed picked up her shopping bag and walked right out the front door. She looked so beautiful no one even tried to stop her. A car pulled up and she got in. Hector, at the wheel, glanced in the rear view mirror, transfixed by her beauty. Dora looked at the smiling woman sitting next to her. "You're going to be all right," she said. Dora smiled back and said, "I know."

The End



Who is Roland C. Bonay?



He started reading comic books at an early age and soon discovered he had a flair for telling stories of his own. As he grew, he dreamed of following in the footsteps of his idol, comic book legend, Stan Lee. His passion ebbed and his dream faded as it became necessary to pursue a more traditional lifestyle in order to raise his growing family. The dream was rekindled in early 2009 as the youngest of his four children blossomed into young adulthood. Roland's vision is best summed up by his motto; "the world would be a better place if we all just learned to draw."

Find out what Roland has been up to lately at his blog; <http://rcbonayatwork.com/>

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Contact Roland at rcbonay@gmail.com

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