



left, Shelby McQuilkin, Guardian, [www.blog.shelbymcquilkin.com](http://www.blog.shelbymcquilkin.com)

# Luminosity

written by Mary Louise Kane

“Can you hear me?”

I always ask that question of the soul I am sent to lead into eternity. If it is a peaceful death I might be heard, but not always. And if not, then all that remains is for me to stay by the side of the dying mortal until that spirit has crossed over. Children always hear but they don't need me because they can still remember the light and are eager to return to it. Very old mortals also perceive my voice, though often they prefer not to talk but rather wait in companionable silence for their crossing.

Strangely, the desire to communicate comes mostly from dark souls. What is a dark soul you ask, expecting to be told tales of terrible deeds that cannot be forgiven? But you would be wrong. Quite

simply a truly dark soul is one who has passed over without repentance. And those are the ones who know true fear.

Life does not always flash before the eyes of the dying, but I gain knowledge of those souls I am sent to escort, down to the tiniest detail. The one I have been sent for this night has no fear at all for he was considered a very good man. He spent his mortal life in the service of others and there is no higher calling. You might of course say that no mortal is without some fear of dying. And you would be correct. But I am referring not to the point of corporal death but to the fear of what is to come for the spirit; the exact second mortals perceive the truth of the universe.



top right, Janet Armstrong, *Castle in the Clouds*, [www.justimajan.com](http://www.justimajan.com)  
 bottom left, David Esslemont, *More from Angels*, Celtic Cross Press, *The Salvage Press*  
 bottom middle, David Esslemont, *More from Angels*, Celtic Cross Press, *The Salvage Press*  
 bottom right, David Esslemont, *More from Angels*, Celtic Cross Press, *The Salvage Press*



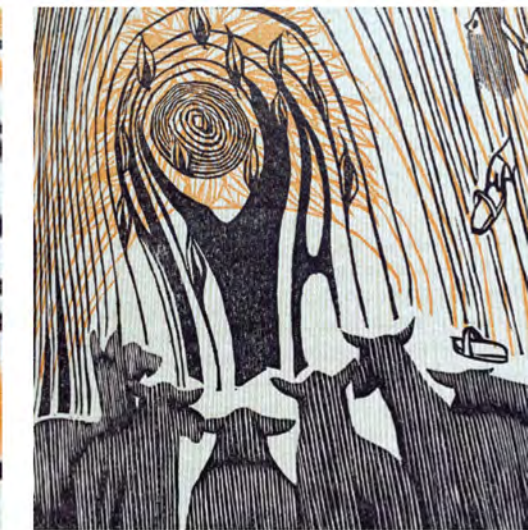
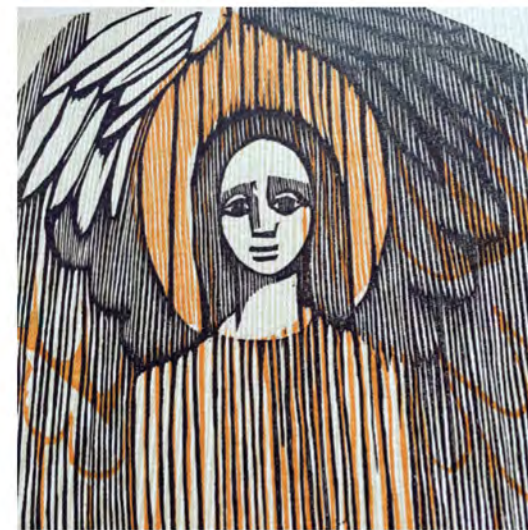
I don't want you to start visualizing fluffy white clouds and heavenly choirs, incense, bells tolling, calls to prayer and the unrolling of mats, but rather joining a light so pure you cannot begin to imagine it. As for dark souls what happens to them you ask. Their punishment is to see the light and for a brief moment experience the joy of it, only to have it taken away forever. And it is only at the moment of passing mortals gain a true understanding of what eternity really means.

But back to the present and I can see this will be a long night. Many surround his bedside. And in the square outside, indeed across this entire world, people are holding vigil with lighted candles and offering up prayers for his safe passage. Our eyes meet and he silently asks me to help him pass the time until his corporal body is ready to let go, which is much harder nowadays for advances in science have overshadowed nature and its natural order. Like you, he is interested in an explanation of what separates a good soul from a dark one. It is not complicated. Mortals judge by outward appearance, but the truth is written in an old human adage. It is what lies within that counts and what makes a good soul is simply the ability to forgive. This my current soul understands only too well, after all he is head

of an organization that was founded centuries earlier upon just that corner stone.

I metaphorically shrug my shoulders and settle at his pillow. I have a tale to tell.

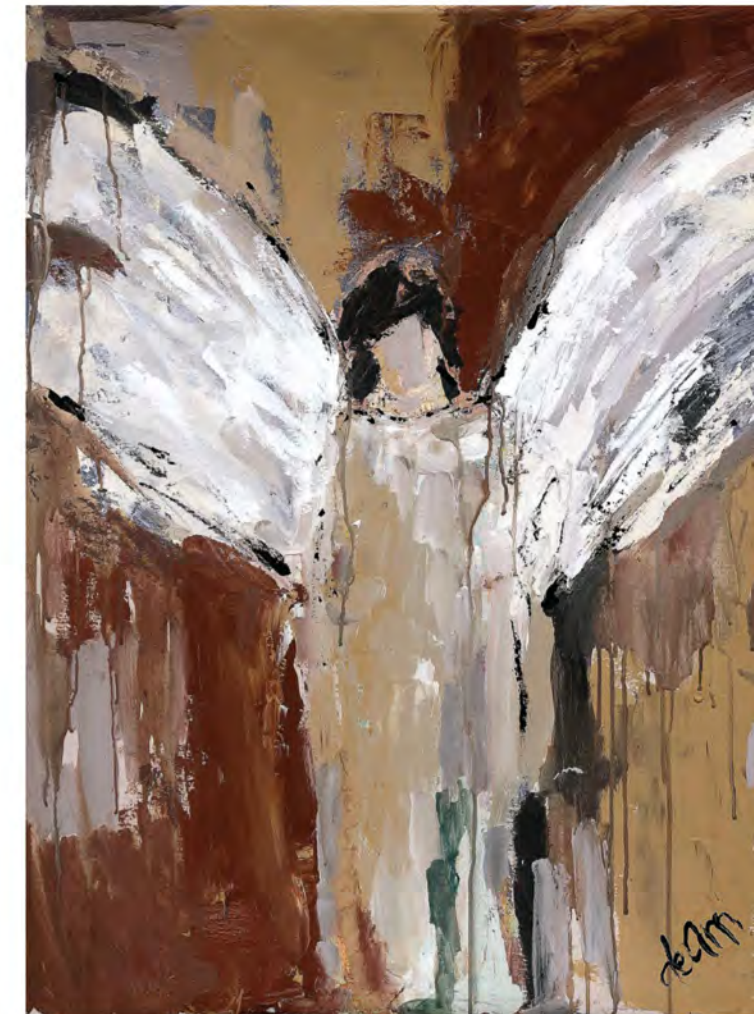
SHE was what mortals would refer to as an old soul. Not an Aphrodite or a Venus, but pleasing to the eye, average height, hazel eyes and pretty light brown hair. Orphaned at an early age and brought up by two great-aunts, life was not hard. In fact there was plenty for what makes life valued by mortals. So all that she lacked was affection and what we all crave, myself included, love. But unexpectedly this did not make her hard or selfish or unkind, just the opposite in fact. And as she matured into an adult, her kindness to her fellow man only grew. She was shy and gentle, unassuming and self-effacing. No wonder then that the man she met when she was in her twenties fell completely in love with her. He was successful in the world of men and money but like her, an orphan and also like her, shy. They married and had twin boys. Neither of them was very good at making friends but they gave generously to charities both at home and overseas which made them much sought after. All in all, a good couple you would say. That came to an end one foggy winter's afternoon when a drunk driver smashed into her







above left, St. Gertrude's Angel  
above right, Silently Guiding



above left, Immortal Angel  
above right, Takes Courage

husband's car while he was driving the little boys home from school. All three were killed outright and the continuing tragedy was that she knew the driver and spoke up for him in court. He'd lost his entire family in a fire the previous year and had turned to drink. He wept as she forgave him. She spent the next twenty years, working diligently on school and hospital boards, but remaining friendless apart from a few acquaintances that refused to let her alone. Until she reached fifty-one when she met HIM.

HE was not born into great wealth, but to decent people who struggled to provide a private education

they hoped would give him a good start in life. But instead of being grateful he begrudged that they introduced him to a better world but failed, as he saw it, to launch him properly into it. He was tall enough to be considered a fine man, just a tad under six feet, light blue eyes and a strong physique he worked hard to maintain. But as an indication of the inner man, his chin was weak and his gaze somewhat petulant. His shoes were designer-made but always slightly down at heel, his jeans expensive but not new. His jackets and coats were of finest wool, but with threadbare cuffs. He was an actor and in fact

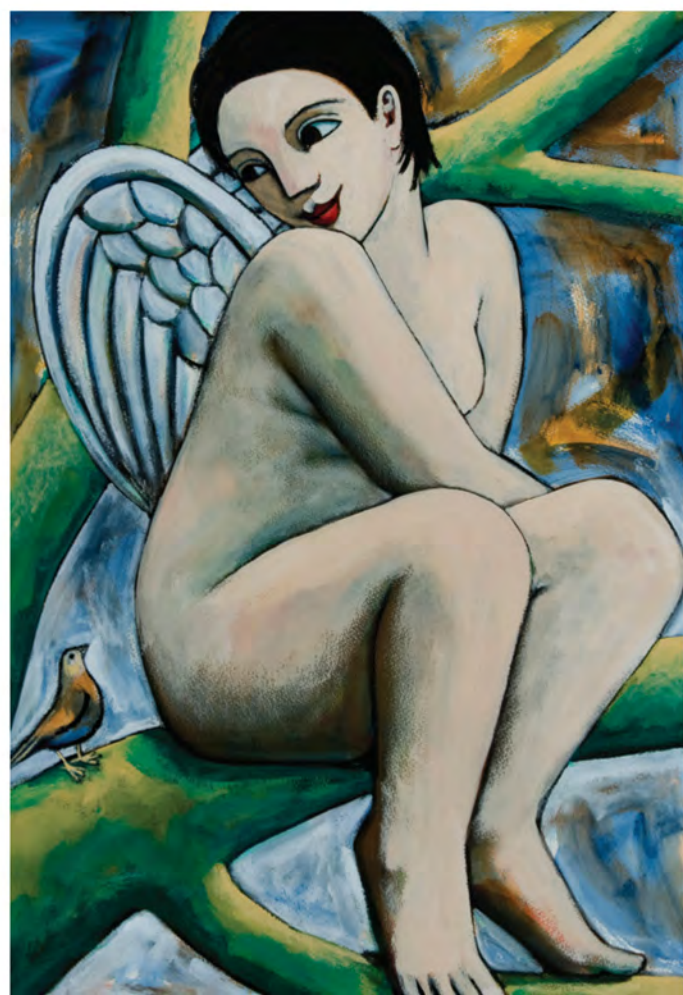
did possess a natural talent. But those top roles, the ones he thought he should get, always eluded him. The chances he was given, he squandered as being beneath him. So he remained on the edge of success, not unknown but never quite arriving.

The lifestyle he thought he deserved did not come cheap. He ran through the inheritance from his deceased parents with no thought to the future until one day he found himself on the fringe of society. Not the fringe of a fruitful society you might be thinking, but rather the fringe of something else altogether. He started taking cocaine, began

to borrow money he could not repay, indulged in depraved sexual acts with both men and women. He had fallen into the orbit of people who were so dark they might have been born that way. He was thirty.

He knew when they met at a charity lunch that she was not only lonely but also wealthy and he won her over with all the charm and skill he possessed. He was after all an actor and in her innocence she did not stand a chance. He knew she had money but had no idea her deceased husband had known only too well of her gentle nature and had left a tightly controlled trust fund in his wake. She could live









Previous Page, top left, Anita Klein, *Angel with Gift*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)  
 center left, Anita Klein, *Angel of the Seedling*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)  
 bottom left, Anita Klein, *Angel Protecting an Acorn*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)  
 top middle, Anita Klein, *Thoughtful Angel*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)

Previous Page, bottom middle, Anita Klein, *Angelo e Uccello sull'Albero*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)  
 right, Michael Hermesh, *The Patron Saint of Archers*, [www.lloydgallery.com](http://www.lloydgallery.com)  
 This Page, above left, Rassouli, *Revealing Strength*, [www.rassouli.com](http://www.rassouli.com)  
 above right, Kathryn Amisson, *Sunset Reflections*, [www.stephenloweartgallery.ca](http://www.stephenloweartgallery.ca)

comfortably, well even, but she could not give large sums of money away unless it was to a recognised charity. And sponging, feckless young men were decidedly not on that list.

He found out too late. After he had seduced her. He only wanted rid of her.

She knew he was basically a bad lot as her aunts would have said, but she loved him regardless. He had a small apartment the wrong end of the King's Road but he never took her there so they used her cottage in Wiltshire or her studio loft in North London. Their sex life was a revelation to her; she

gave and gave and still found more to give. He took and gave nothing back.

The day finally dawned when he knew he had reached the point of no return. He was in so deep there was no way out and he knew it would take something truly heinous to get him off the hook.

He received an introduction to someone firmly entrenched in the criminal world. Someone that organised events in buildings awaiting demolition, events that were so foul and so grim they must perforce be enacted away from all societal knowledge. Men would gather in large numbers









Previous Page, top left, *Rising*  
 bottom left, Kathryn Amisson, *An Explosion of Colour*, [www.stephenloweartgallery.ca](http://www.stephenloweartgallery.ca)  
 right, Loretta Farsan, *Sphere*, [www.westmountgallery.com](http://www.westmountgallery.com)

This Page, above left, Michael Hermesh, *A Greater Strength*, [www.theavenuegallery.com](http://www.theavenuegallery.com)  
 above middle, *Angel* by Saiten  
 above right, *Angel with Flower*, *Woodcut Angels*

and a lone, unsuspecting female would be sacrificed upon the altar of their unspeakable desires. The men would commit their violence turn upon turn until the woman died in unimaginable fear and pain.

The payment for producing such a sacrifice would relieve him of all debt. Without a second thought,

he fabricated the lie, drove her to a screening party that did not exist and left her surrounded by vile men, dressed unsuspectingly in an expensive little black dress and elegant Ferragamo heels; in truth a gem of the finest purity cast before men not fit to be called swine.

She turned as he abruptly left her in the middle of the floor and realised first the heartbreak and then the agony that was to descend upon her. When she was taken savagely by the first of them her terror was unbearable, spreading out across the universe like vapors from a dying star. I was immediately

dispatched to her side but I could do nothing except wait for her soul. And as I waited I would have given my very existence in exchange for the power to change her fate. But the only power I possessed was to stay with her until it was over. And of course, that is what I did, anger growing within me all the while.





above left, Michael Hermesh, *The Battle for Truth*, [www.lloydgallery.com](http://www.lloydgallery.com)

I watched as they threw her out of the van on the outskirts of London onto the filthy Rainham landfill. Garbage spread as far as the eye could see and gulls slowly appeared on the skyline as the day dawned. They did not care if she was still alive or not, she was merely trash to them and would soon be dead anyway. She was naked and completely despoiled,

but miraculously still breathing, front teeth missing and her limbs twisted and broken with her thighs covered in blood. But as I drew close to her, my own heart breaking at such vandalism, I could find no essence of hate. The image in her one open eye was that of forgiveness, that and the reflection of him turning his back on her.



top right, Fiona Omeeny, *Spirits Watching Us*, [www.japingkaoriginalart.com](http://www.japingkaoriginalart.com)  
bottom right, Fiona Omeeny, *Spirits Everywhere*, [www.japingkaoriginalart.com](http://www.japingkaoriginalart.com)

She never completely departed this world although her place in the light was assured. Sometimes I took her with me to sit with those who were going on their own journey. Her enduring mortal goodness was most enjoyable on what was often long hours of attendance. But I only took her to the passing of good souls, and children. She especially loved their

faces as they left this world and entered into the light. It reminded her of her own little ones, I think. She was never a ghost or a lost spirit but a being that belonged in the light, although she chose to remain attached to this world.

The years passed and I had not seen her for a while when I came across him again. He would have been



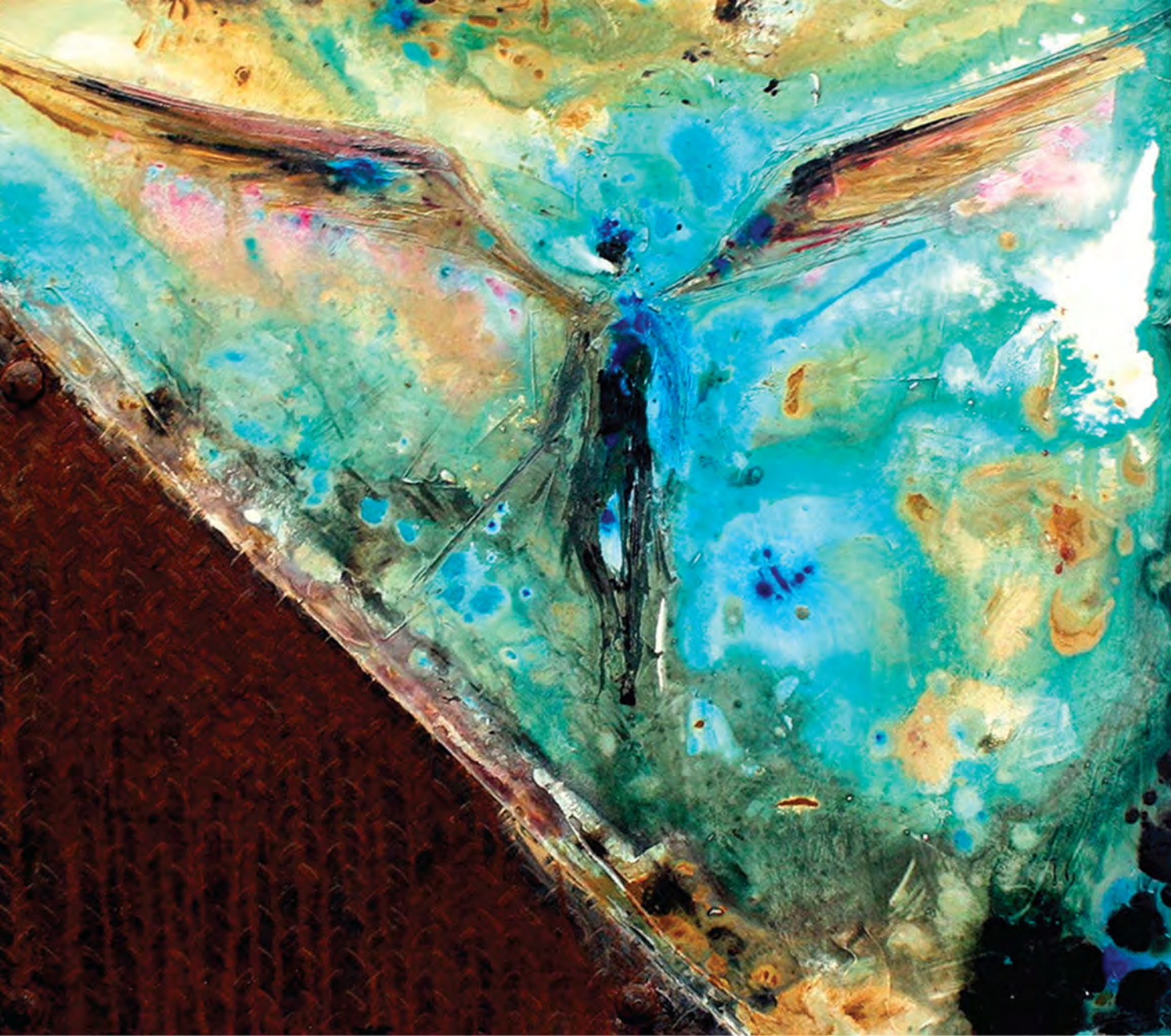


top left, Anita Klein, *Flying Angel 2*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)  
 center left, Anita Klein, *Angel with a Triangle*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)  
 bottom left, Anita Klein, *Flying Angel 1*, [www.anitaklein.com](http://www.anitaklein.com)  
 above right, Qavavau Manumie, Cape Dorset Nunavut, [www.madronagallery.com](http://www.madronagallery.com)

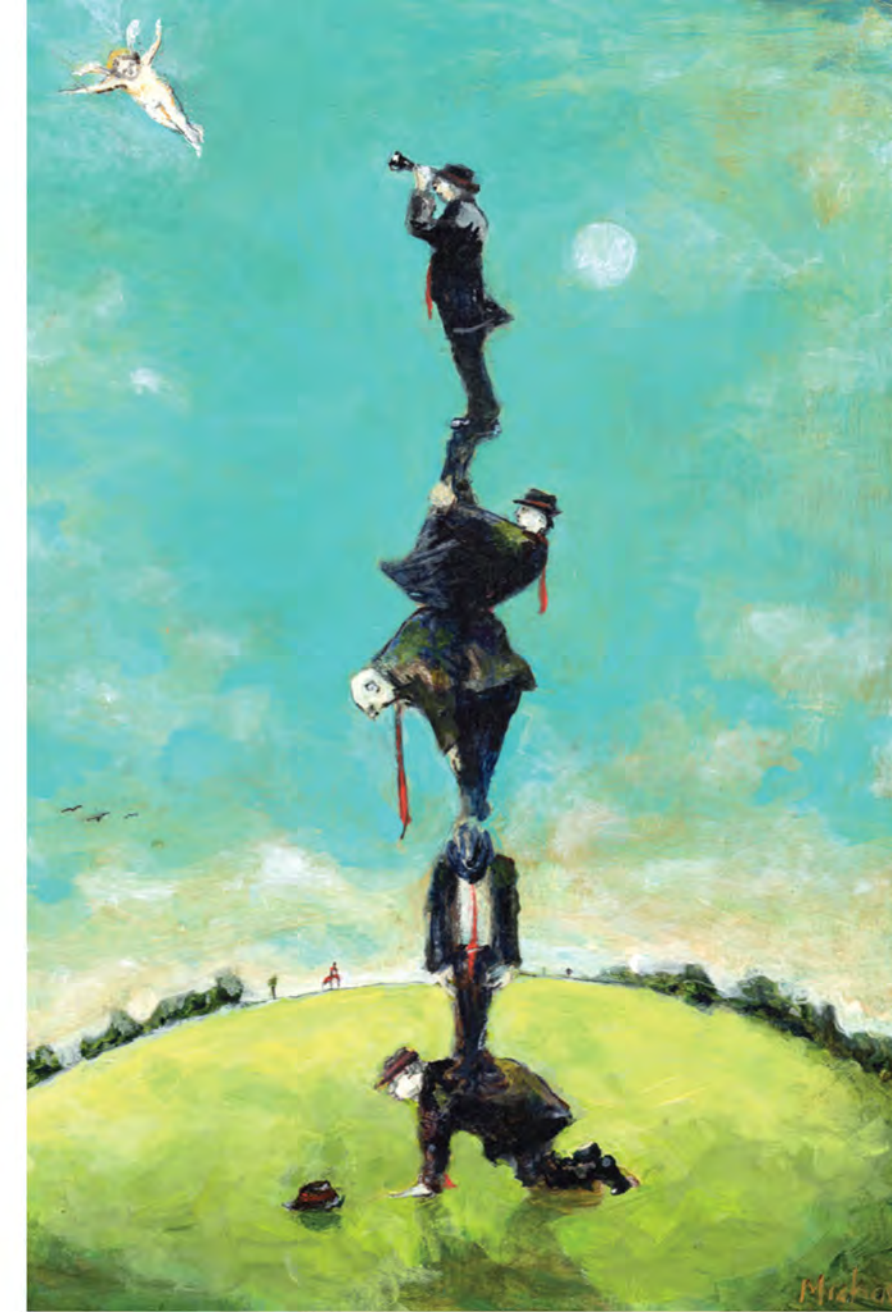
in his late forties and was lying in a dirty room on the outskirts of Toronto with no heat or light, shooting some drug directly into a vein. He had gone to Los Angeles after that terrible evening and secured a decent part as a villain in a blockbuster. But true to character, he felt he deserved more and his reputation as a diva grew until no one wanted to work with him. The next movie was an unmitigated

disaster but it landed him a role in a TV series. That too was a failure, pulled after only three weeks and then a short run play in New York but very "off-Broadway" until finally he was reduced to shooting commercials in Ontario. He was lying close to death in this rat-infested squalor but I still found no trace of repentance in his heart. Her presence was all about him like a second skin but there was nothing, not





above left, Christian Contemporary painting of Angels



above left, Michael Hermesh, *Again I Dreamt I Could Fly*, [www.michaelhermesh.com](http://www.michaelhermesh.com)  
above right, Michael Hermesh, *Angel Hunters of Panache*, [www.theavenuegallery.com](http://www.theavenuegallery.com)

even the tiniest hint of remorse for the life he so had carelessly annihilated in such brutal fashion.

She materialized beside me as he lay there and tried to touch him but that is against the lore of the universe. I had always known she chose to remain on earth in order to offer him one last chance of salvation. And it was then that I committed my great sin.

I could have allowed him to feel her presence but because I loved her from the very first terrible moment I saw her, I sacrificed my immortality to punish him. I must confess something now to you my awaiting soul, and to you as well my listeners. I had no intention of allowing him to remember just in case he did repent. I desired with every fibre of my

being for him to pay for his crime with his immortal soul and nothing else would suffice. I did not have to wait long. His end came and he passed screaming into the abyss. But I felt no guilt because even then he didn't remember her name.

A fraction of a second after his fall, the room we were standing in disappeared and the landfill she

had passed over in opened up around her like a mirage. But instead of rotting garbage she was surrounded by flowers and trees. Birdsong filled our ears and she turned to me with a wondrous smile before melting into the light that bloomed all about her. Her passing was complete and her soul added to the light of billions.





far left, Kathryn Amisson, *Stunning Sight 2*,  
[www.stephenloweartgallery.ca](http://www.stephenloweartgallery.ca)  
left, Kathryn Amisson, *The Sun Takes a Peek*,  
[www.stephenloweartgallery.ca](http://www.stephenloweartgallery.ca)

Something hurt my eye and it was a while before I could open it and move on.

I get tired now and I long to rejoin the light. I have wondered lately if it is my punishment for that one failure to never rejoin the universe, that I must spend all of eternity escorting others. But now, this great leader I have been sent to collect, he is finally ready for me. There have been many like him in the Vatican City down through the centuries and some have been dark. But this one is lighter than most and I am honoured to escort him.

Wait. He is holding out his hand, not to follow but to lead me into the light that beckons. Suddenly I am filled with what you mortals call hope. My heart is flooded with luminosity and this world fades as we soar up to the firmament beyond and into the brilliant light that eclipses all else.

And foolish though it might be, I am suddenly sure I will find her light up here in the vast beauty of the universe.