

“Seniors” Rant

A rant dedicated to all “seniors” in geriatric wards and nursing homes

we're sick we're stuck we're fucked
we're labelled we're libelled
“demented” “incompetent”
like Eveylyn Parm (1)
and others locked up in Ontario nursing homes
our sons and daughters sentenced us
for our own good of course
where brothers and sisters
homeless social justice activists
like Mel Starkman (2)
rejected by family
lie on used sheets in cold beds
navigate overcrowded hallways
in broken wheelchairs
abused and neglected
by “caring” staff and “concerned” relatives
where we languish in agony
targeted by Covid-19
brain-damaged
shaking with parkinson's shaken by dementia
our souls destroyed by psychiatry's
“safe and effective” medication
“antipsychotics” and “antidepressants”
poisons that make us suicidal
so when our families visit us next time
don't bother bringing us anything
talk to us for a change
read us a Dylan Thomas poem
like “Don't go gently into that good night”
hold our worn wrinkled wise hands
hug us tight and close and long
if that's not too much to ask or do
before we die nameless forgotten
waiting for nonexistent care and cure
in loneliness and isolation

1. Evelyn Park was a former accountant; a feisty elder wrongly labelled “financially incompetent.” The late mental health lawyer and awesome psychiatric survivor Carla McKague successfully fought to remove the “incompetency” label from Evelyn's medical chart before Evelyn was transferred to, and died in, a Toronto nursing home. See Evelyn's story “Good old

'999'' in B.Burstow and D. Weitz (Eds), Shrink Resistant: the struggle against psychiatry in Canada,1988, pp.111-115.

2. Mel Starkman was a close longtime friend and respected housing and antipsychiatry activist. He choked to death in a Toronto nursing home. His family never visited him and never wrote an obituary.

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