

Jean Kane

an excerpt of

Unstuck

A big flannel pillowcase of a guy caught my eye the instant before I realized that he was me.

Too much imagination, the experts agreed. I'd been trying to have just the right amount of that faculty—enough to buy a long mirror to make my studio look bigger and to maintain a hobby that did not involve dope. I'd picked baking over sewing and eating over shopping. I'd grown a paunch.

Medication? Yessireepop, I could answer in the affirmative, then wait for my dad, gripping the receiver a few hundred miles to the south in Newport News, to resume breathing. No funny business, I'd say. Stop worrying.

At twenty-nine, I was learning to color inside the lines: emptying my brain-pan weekly with Dr. Conte, proofreading law books for Lippert Associates, hanging with my best friend Daniel, wearing the pants in the family. My cat Lucky nuzzled her whiskers against mine every morning in approval. She soothed me, now that my other creature comfort was in lockdown.

No bunny fizness by any measure.

Then Molly was installed in the work-pod next to mine.