

On Resemblance: No Bridge is an Island

This is a short story told by Rebecca, who imagines herself as if in a theater, performing a one-woman show, telling an imaginary audience how she had a baby using **Assisted Reproductive Technology** (A.R.T.).

With “On Resemblance: No Bridge is an Island,” I turn questions of identity into character, through a confident, ironic, subversively self-questioning woman protagonist. From the Hebrew Bible (Sarah’s, Rebecca’s, and Rachel’s infertility) to the present, “assisted reproduction” is, in truth, about much more than a technology of biological intervention.

Rebecca calls herself a “genetic island.” Adopted herself, she bears a child using an egg donor. What does this mean to be unlinked, unconnected by blood, to either the past or the future? Why do all my kooky relatives see what they want to see? Do we all see what we want to see? Is it all an instance of mistaken identity?

With accessible humor and irony, this story explores the quintessential human question: who and what are we? Is it our biology, our culture, our personality? These technologies force us to confront all of these. In a narrative style part Woody Allen, part Grace Paley, I explore how technological innovations in fertility affect women’s lives in often unexpected, funny or tragic ways, and sometimes both at once.

This story, which also can work as a film/theatrical script, belongs to a series of linked stories I am writing based on women’s lives in motherhood, achieved through assisted reproductive technologies, surrogacy, and adoption. I am especially interested in how faith--whatever its denomination, including atheist, influences the choices women make in order to create a family.