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Today Is a Miracle

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In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

Today Is a Miracle

Rachel Graham Cody (bio)

The day of the accident, we woke late. We ate breakfast outside, sitting in grass already warm from the sun. The air smelled of lavender, eucalyptus, and the pale pink roses blooming beside us. We changed

directly from pajamas into swimsuits: rainbow stripes for Charlotte, multi-colored polka dots for Eve, a navy one-piece for me, and a waterproof diaper for Daisy. We were at the tail end of a week's visit to my mother-in-law's. My husband, Tom, had gone to a meeting, his mother to work. The girls and I had no obligations but to enjoy each other and the day. Jane had turned on the pool heater, and when we slipped in, the water seemed to mirror the sky: turquoise, flawless, embracing.

Charlotte and Eve sat on the pool's wide steps while I bounced Daisy up and down nearby. They sang a song they were learning in preschool —“*el pescadito lo más chiquito*”—and practiced swimming: propping themselves up on their forearms and churning the water with their legs. They called each other Donald and James, hosted a tea party, and invited their imaginary friends to join.

I sat Daisy on the top step and swooshed each of the three-year-olds in wide arcs around the pool's shallow end. They rode on my back to the middle of the pool, until I was on my tiptoes and the water reached **[End Page 107]** our chins. Daisy tried to pull off her blue and red sunhat, smacked the water, and laughed. When I put them down, the girls giggled, lowered their faces into the water to blow bubbles, and crab-walked around the edge of the pool, their hands, still chubby with baby fat, gripping, sliding, gripping, sliding against the rough cement.

I did back flips and handstands, waving my toes at the girls above the water. I swam a few laps, watched my children from the far end of the pool, and thought, *Today is a miracle*. The girls had been taking swim classes since they were babies, but they viewed them as duty, not pleasure, and tugged on their swimsuits with grim resignation. And then Daisy was born, and I stopped even getting into the pool with them, yet one more separation in a year full of them.

But this morning was different. It was easy and joyful. There was enough of me to go around. I dove under again and again, chasing the underwater sunlight refracted into diamonds.

We came to L.A. for sunshine, a visit with my mother-in-law, and to take Charlotte and Eve to Disneyland. Disney was not part of our original parenting plan. But our girls made clear early on that the poles of their lives were fairies, princesses, and ponies with rainbow tails and sparkly manes. They wore tutus, fairy wings, and rubber rain boots to school. Charlotte, who described all clothes that weren't dress-up ball gowns as "rags," announced she was going to be either a fairy or a mermaid when she grew up, and sang for us under the stage name Princess Love Brontosaurus. Together the girls performed extended renditions of *Sleeping Beauty* on our front porch and were disappointed when we couldn't find fairies on the walk home from school. They had already announced that their fourth birthday, still two months away, would have a princess bouncy castle, "real magic wands, not dress-up ones," and a cake with purple and green princesses on it.

At some point, not going to Disneyland started to seem obstinately rational and adult, like refusing to clap when Tinker Bell asks the audience if they believe.

A week before we went, though, Eve had doubts about the trip. She was worried about forcing the magic into a corner; that by corralling it, **[End Page 108]** touching it, and talking to it, we'd somehow make it disappear. After all, she said, "Fairies don't want to be seen."

I wanted to hate Disneyland. The Royal Banquet Hall was an outdoor stage with plastic columns and fake greenery. The princesses wore...

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The Signature, hungarians passionately love to dance, especially prized national dances, while the wave texture.

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