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8:07 A.M.

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8:07 A.M.

Anjali Mehra

I put my hand on the cold, round knob,
My heart beating faster than ever.
Thoughts rush through my head like a flock of birds,
Chaos, confusion, familiarity.
The images of days gone by,
The hopes and fears of those to come.
They envelop me, consume me;
Plaguing my thoughts forever more.
Echoes of children, their laughter,
Ring through my ears.
Children, unaware of future threats,
Of compassionless beings,
Waiting to conquer their innocent minds.
I wonder, "Will I survive until lunch?"

The knob, so smooth and unaware.
Unaware of the power behind its door.
The door that separates the haven from hell.
I turn this knob,
Forgetting the hatred and loneliness.
Why? Is it my duty?
Is it my will?
The thoughts, the questions.
They invade my body, soul, and mind.
Is my hidden motive down the hall?
Will he notice me today?
It rests on my lips
As I hesitate, doubting my own strength and will.
I wonder, "Will I survive until the end of the day?"

The final step, the final thought.
The secret courage awakening
To new challenges, new obstacles.
I pull open the sacred door,
Vulnerable to the poisoned arrows inside.
I wear the protective mask of everyone else,

The mask of society's pressures and expectations.

Eyes closed, I step forward.

Anxious beatings of the heart pull me back.

The tug-of-war in my mind

Never lessens, never ends.

Eyes open, I exhale.

For I have accepted a new day.

Yet I wonder, "Will I survive until tomorrow?"