Italian Canadiana

Letting Silence Speak: Licia Canton's The Pink House and Other Stories

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Volume 37, numéro 1-2, printemps 2023

The Traces We Leave: Italian-Canadian Writings and the New Millennium

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1108368ar
DOI : https://doi.org/10.33137/ic.v37i1.42109

Aller au sommaire du numéro

Éditeur(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0827-6129 (imprimé)
2564-2340 (numérique)

Découvrir la revue

Citer cet article

Moyes, L. (2023). Letting Silence Speak: Licia Canton's The Pink House and Other Stories. *Italian Canadiana*, *37*(1-2), 123–137. https://doi.org/10.33137/ic.v37i1.42109

Résumé de l'article

As scholars and reviewers of Licia Canton's The Pink House and Other Stories have pointed out, certain characters recur across the cycle of stories and certain events are retold from different perspectives. This is especially evident, I argue, in the series of stories related to a traumatizing accident in which a woman writer is pinned between two car bumpers. These stories, interspersed throughout the collection, are linked not only by continuities in character and detail but also by forms of discontinuity: breaks in the frame of fiction, non-linear narrative practices, and shifts in time and point of view. In the wake of the accident, the woman writer – who is variously a narrator and a character – confronts writer's block and the holes in her memory, as well as all the interruptions of daily life. The stories are a study in silence, a silence that is audible at the level of the story cycle, the narration of each story, and the enunciation of each character. By foregrounding gaps in understanding and moments in which the senses say more than words, these stories prompt readers to look for – to imagine – what cannot yet be known or spoken. They point toward states of emotion and ways of making sense of the experience that might otherwise remain locked in silence.

Letting Silence Speak: Licia Canton's *The Pink House and Other Stories*

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Summary: As scholars and reviewers of Licia Canton's *The Pink House and Other Stories* have pointed out, certain characters recur across the cycle of stories and certain events are retold from different perspectives. This is especially evident, I argue, in the series of stories related to a traumatizing accident in which a woman writer is pinned between two car bumpers. These stories, interspersed throughout the collection, are linked not only by continuities in character and detail but also by forms of discontinuity: breaks in the frame of fiction, non-linear narrative practices, and shifts in time and point of view. In the wake of the accident, the woman writer – who is variously a narrator and a character – confronts writer's block and the holes in her memory, as well as all the interruptions of daily life. The stories are a study in silence, a silence that is *audible* at the level of the story cycle, the narration of each story, and the enunciation of each character. By foregrounding gaps in understanding and moments in which the senses say more than words, these stories prompt readers to look for – to imagine – what cannot yet be known or spoken. They point toward states of emotion and ways of making sense of the experience that might otherwise remain locked in silence.

Introduction

The stories in Licia Canton's *The Pink House and Other Stories* are linked not just by continuities but also by forms of discontinuity – that is, shifts in perspective, breaks in conversation, writer's block, gaps in memory, non sequiturs, and threads dropped and picked up again. In reading the collection through this lens of discontinuity, what emerges most saliently for me is the question of silence. Silence has inspired research in a range of fields including linguistics, communications, philosophy, and Cultural Studies, and, as Cassandre Meunier argues, since the late 1990s, there has been a critical

cross-pollination between theories of silence and studies of fiction.[1] Linguist Adam Jaworski observes that scholarship across the disciplines has moved "beyond the simple view of silence as 'absence of sound'" toward "the idea of *silence as metaphor for communication*."[2] In his terms,

> If we treat silence as a metaphor, we can use it to define various communicative phenomena. For example, we can say that a pause in discourse, a question left unanswered, a refusal to greet someone, a whisper which is not to reach a third party, avoidance of a topic in conversation, deafening noise, irrelevant talk, or a frozen gesture of an artist on stage are all different instances of "silence."[3]

This list of communicative phenomena is relevant to a reading of Canton's stories, and in what follows, I analyze such phenomena from a literary perspective. Jaworski's concept of silence as metaphor underscores the fact that any given instance of silence points toward something else – or, in my terms, any instance of silence opens a productive space of reading that does not allow meaning to settle into a single interpretation.

In *The Pink House and Other Stories*, a given silence often reverberates across more than one story, and in this sense, my essay takes into account the cumulative weave of the short-story cycle. Silence, in Canton, also echoes across the frame of fiction – that is, the frame usually understood as separating the fictional universe from the real – and silence functions at a metafictional level through the thematization of enunciative processes of writing and reading. In some stories, the main character is a writer, a role that foregrounds the challenge of breaking with silence, creating the conditions of possibility for writing, and carrying out the work of composition. A pressing question, in several of the stories, is how to write in the wake of trauma – specifically, an accident outside the Bell Centre after a Leonard Cohen concert, in which the main character is pinned between the rear bumper of her parked car and the bumper of a car which accelerates into her. Silence, in this context, takes many forms; expressed another way, the literary text finds various ways of making silence known and audible to the reader. In the stories I analyze, for example, interior monologue and free indirect discourse play an important

[1] Meunier, "The Values of Silence."

[2] Jaworski, "Introduction," 3.

[3] Jaworski, "Introduction," 3.

role in presenting characters who do more thinking than speaking, and attention to sensory experience becomes a way of foregrounding moments in which there is no language.

In scholarship on short fiction, discussions of silence often focus on the work of specific writers. Ernest Hemingway, for example, has inspired a number of studies, including an essay by Erik Nakjavani on Hemingway's theory of omission.[4] According to Hemingway, "if a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have the feeling of those things as though the writer had stated them."[5] Nakjavani understands this theory as key to the aesthetic principles of the short story. For him, the fictional act of invention "is sustained by the tension between the said and the as-yet-unsaid, between the written and the unwritten."[6] The fiction of Kazuo Ishiguro, too, has inspired important work on silence. In an essay on his early short story "A Strange and Sometimes Sadness," Enora Lessinger makes helpful distinctions between three kinds of silence: "silence *in* the stories (literal silences)"; "silences *of* the story (what the story does not say)"; and silence that "functions as a narrative strategy."[7] Whereas Lessinger analyzes these three forms of silence in three discrete sections, I have chosen to focus on the way the three forms overlap and intersect in Canton's *The Pink House and Other Stories*. In other words, silences that occur within the diegesis, the time and place of the events, draw attention to the relationship – negotiated at the level of the narration – between what characters say and what they think. What is more, the silences *of* the stories surface at many levels, within each story and across the collection. These silences are often pieces of information or experience that have been lost in trauma rather than simply "omitted," in the terms used by Hemingway. Writer-characters make no claims to total mastery of the process of composition; they struggle to write their stories by reconstructing what can be pieced together or imagined rather than what can be known.

Negotiating Speech and Silence

[4] This theory was first and, for Nakjavani, best articulated in Hemingway's nonfictional work *Death in the Afternoon* and then taken up again in the essay "The Art of the Short Story."

[5] Cited in Nakjavani, "The Aesthetics of Silence," 39.

[6] Nakjavani, "The Aesthetics of Silence," 40.

[7] Lessinger, "Genesis of a Poetics of Silence."

Jaworski, in his introduction to *Silence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, makes a distinction between silence as a metaphor for communication and "silence understood as pause, non-speaking, etc."[8] He explains that the collection of essays he has edited will focus on the former (eloquent silence) rather than on the latter (absence of sound or speech). In a literary context, it would be difficult to make such a distinction; silence, in literature, is both the pause or instance of non-speaking *and* the trope or turning toward something else. Silence, as I discuss it in this essay, is always a negotiation with some form of signifying or speech and, in this sense, is far less ruly than Jaworski's understanding of "silence as a unifying concept for tackling diverse communicative phenomena."[9]

The word "silence" and its cognates occur many times in Canton's stories. Sometimes silence is exactly what the main character wants. The story "Refuge in the Vineyard," for example, opens with the following:

> Why had she come back?
>
> She lies on the grass, grapevines on either side of her. Eyes closed she listens to the silence. *Silenzio*. Soothing. Soothing silence. Ah, if it were only possible to come back to the vineyard and the silence every time she needed to. Only the vineyard. Only the silence.[10]

This silent communion with the vines, "I suoi amici,"[11] has always existed for her – listening to her childhood secrets, consoling her after a failed relationship as a young woman, and offering respite from the words of her father during this return visit. But the time and place of the return visit is punctuated by other moments, notably at the family table in suburban Montreal where the number of demands overwhelm her. In these situations, it is her younger son who understands and, without speaking, gives her a kind of energy that doesn't require words. In the vineyard, at the end of the story, it is this child who knows why she is there (for he also seeks quiet) and who puts

[8] Jaworski, "Introduction," 3.

[9] Jaworski, "Introduction," 3.

[10] Canton, *The Pink House*, 30.

[11] My translation: "her friends"; Canton, *The Pink House*, 30.

the problem into words: "Tu sei qui perché nonno ha parlato troppo."[12] In other words, it is possible to say too much.

Silence is also what the first-person narrator seeks in "Behind the Curtain," which is set at the hospital immediately following the accident. Finding herself in a room with three noisy men, the first-person narrator regrets the noise of her body: the sound of her urinating in the hospital bedpan or grinding her teeth.[13] When one of the men in the room complains that he should be allowed to do what he wants, that he is not in prison, the narrator tells the reader, "Feels like *I* am in prison."[14] This prison is her injured body and the position in which the accident has placed her, but it is also a form of self-restraint that she performs in an ongoing way. It becomes abundantly clear that the narrator is not telling those around her what she thinks or feels. When a doctor asks her if she has been sleeping under the pink hat she is wearing, she answers, "No, I am just quiet," and then continues, for the benefit of the reader, "I'm actually pretending that I am not here, but I don't say that to him."[15] This too is a form of silence, but a silence which is foregrounded and, at the same time, is broken by the narration of her thoughts.

In these two stories, silence is a much-sought-after balm, but it is also a signal that something needs to be spoken, that something cannot yet be spoken. The silence of the vineyard is productive: it allows for a meeting of characters, languages, and moments. It opens a space for the boy to articulate for his mother – and for the reader – the problem of his grandfather's unkind words; the boy speaks what his mother cannot (or cannot yet) say. In "Behind the Curtain," the grinding of the narrator's teeth, something she wishes would go away, speaks of difficult emotion that needs to be voiced and heard.[16] The narrator, by giving the reader access to far more than she actually says out loud, effectively foregrounds the terms of her silence, as well as the conditions in which she might speak. In fact, throughout the cycle of stories, silence is not so much a form of peace and quiet as it is a complicated negotiation with speech.

Although it would be possible to find silence at work in each of the stories in Canton's *The Pink House and Other Stories*, to do so would be

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[12] My translation: "You are here because *nonno* said too much"; Canton, *The Pink House*, 44.

[13] Canton, *The Pink House*, 105–106.

[14] Canton, *The Pink House*, 112, emphasis in the original.

[15] Canton, *The Pink House*, 113.

[16] Canton, *The Pink House*, 106.

beyond the scope of the present essay. In what follows, I focus on the series of stories that relate to the accident: "In Front of the Bell Centre," "Because of Leonard Cohen," "The Woman in the Red Coat," "The Driver," "Soft Pastels," and "Behind the Curtain." This is a somewhat artificial grouping in the sense that these stories are not presented in an unbroken sequence in the collection. Instead, they are interspersed with stories that are equally intense in their preoccupations but do not reference the accident.[17] By drawing these six stories together, I am able to address the way silence surfaces across the series in a range of forms, including inconsistencies in voice, shifting postures of narration, recurring fragments of experience, and gaps in the logic of the frame of fiction.

Where Language and Narrative Break Down

In the stories listed above, the fragmented, non-chronological presentation of events and the use of different angles of vision to frame the same event make the reader aware of gaps in knowledge and awareness. The account of the accident is told and retold, sometimes from an external and sometimes from an internal point of view – but there is no complete account. "In Front of the Bell Centre," the first story that makes reference to the accident, is short, oblique, and unframed. Like an accident, it jolts and disorients the reader. Although it begins with the words "I am here," the reader doesn't immediately know who is speaking or if these words are actually voiced. The story continues: "Her face is a bold mask. A cold stare that says 'what do you want? Where do you want me to be?'"[18] Here again, the reader has to wait for details – in this or other stories – to understand that the "bold mask" is the face of the narrator's daughter. There is no explicit reference to silence, but the story is nonetheless structured by it: the "mask" and the "stare," for instance, are transacted in silence.

Similarly, the response of the first-person narrator is conveyed only by her thoughts: "Closer. I'd like you to be closer. That's what I'm thinking. That's what I'd like. I don't say it. I'm comforted to see that she is there. To know that she has stopped screaming. I didn't see her scream, but I know

[17] For discussion of a wider range of stories from the collection, see Bonomo, "Thinking Our Way(s) Home," 4–10, and Canton, "Writing Canadian Narratives," 61–64.

[18] Canton, *The Pink House*, 17.

that she was the one screaming. A loud screeching yell."[19] In this story, speech disintegrates, sometimes into silence and sometimes into screams, and with it go the usual borders between "I," "she," and "you." These three pronouns, each of which refers to the narrator's daughter but from a different position in discourse, enact the fracturing of narrative voice. The things said by "I," about "her," and to "you" are also potential comments by the narrator, about herself, in the moment of the accident. This slippage in identity, this "not-knowing-who," is especially true of the "loud screeching yell," which seems to be attributed to the narrator's daughter in this story but is more clearly associated with the narrator herself in the second story, "Because of Leonard Cohen": "*And then I heard a scream. My own scream.*"[20]

The forms of incoherence at work in these stories are in keeping with Cathy Caruth's observations that, in the wake of trauma, literature affords an opportunity to explore the "complex relation between knowing and not knowing,"[21] and that "trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way its very unassimilated nature … returns to haunt the survivor later on."[22] As I suggested above, "In Front of the Bell Centre" inhabits the edges of representation. The only lines clearly voiced in this story are, "'I'm a doctor. What's your name? How old are you? Squeeze my hand."[23] These words resurface in the italicized sections toward the end of "Because of Leonard Cohen." Narrated in the first person in "Because of Leonard Cohen," a story told otherwise in the third person, these italicized memories are markedly sensory. They include the words "I see you," the screams, the pain, the cold ground, the faces, someone holding her hand, and the gesture of squeezing that hand. It is as if the accident, which could not be processed or assimilated by the woman as it occurred, returns here in the form of fragments of corporeal and sensory memory.

Writer's Block

If silence in the stories about the accident entails a "disarticulation" of language and narrative, it also takes the form of writer's block. A story such as "Because of Leonard Cohen" does the double work of depicting the traumatic

[19] Canton, *The Pink House*, 17.

[20] Canton, *The Pink House*, 26, emphasis in the original.

[21] Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 3.

[22] Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 4.

[23] Canton, *The Pink House*, 17.

event and depicting the process of coming to write after such a trauma. "You have to write about that," the woman's art therapist insists.[24] In response, the woman had saved a blank document to her computer under the title "Because of Leonard Cohen," but, as the narrator explains, "she hadn't been able to write the story that would go with that title. Not yet."[25] Of course, this is also the title of the story we are reading, a metafictional gesture in which the short story refers to its own process of production. But it is more than that: the "blank document" underscores the challenge of giving representation to trauma. It is difficult to narrate an event to which one has only partial access, an event riddled with silence. In the words of Anne Whitehead, writers "have frequently found that the impact of trauma can only adequately be represented by mimicking its forms and symptoms, so that temporality and chronology collapse, and narratives are characterized by repetition and indirection."[26] Just as the narrator describes herself as immobilized and "stuck" at the scene of the accident,[27] she feels herself "stuck" in relation to her writing.[28] The physical experience of being pinned between cars, of being unable to get up, repeats itself in various spheres of her life.

Whitehead's account of trauma fiction is equally helpful for reading the final pages of "Because of Leonard Cohen," where the italicized memories the main character has of the accident puncture the smooth surface of the plain-type explanations she gives her art therapist. Whereas the plain text is spoken aloud from the point of view of an external narrator, the italicized lines – which are more literary, more written – are told in the first person. Although the latter passages are not spoken out loud to the therapist, they are hardly "silent"; they convey the noisy, jumbled soundscape of the accident, with its screams and unfamiliar voices. They also constitute interruptions, a phenomenon that, like "being stuck," is linked to the violent interruption of the accident. Here too, then, the story mimics what Whitehead calls the "forms and symptoms" of the trauma.[29] In other words, the story makes an associative link between the accident and the less violent but nonetheless frustrating interruptions of domestic life and quotidian reality. At the same time, interruptions are part of the creative process for the main character in

[24] Canton, *The Pink House*, 20.
[25] Canton, *The Pink House*, 20.
[26] Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction*, 3.
[27] Canton, *The Pink House*, 17.
[28] Canton, *The Pink House*, 24.
[29] Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction*, 3.

the story. In formal terms, it is only by shifting perspective from "she" to "I" and by interrupting the plain type with the immediacy of the unvoiced passages that the story is written at all. What is more, the compositional process is accompanied by that of making coffee: from the gurgling of the espresso maker, which interrupts the woman's first sentence, to the pot bubbling over at the point where the story of the accident starts to break through, to the final line when her husband walks into the kitchen and asks, "Is there any coffee?" And indeed, there is – in the form of a story.

The practices of using one process or medium to access another, and of working with the art therapist, are also central to the story "Soft Pastels." Once again, the reader bears witness to a story about writing a story, but in this case the process of coming to write involves drawing and colour. Instructed by the therapist to close her eyes and draw shapes without lifting the soft pastel from the paper, she finds herself creating "a random pattern, various shapes and sizes that [mean] nothing to [her]."[30] She compares this work to "automatic writing," something that had helped her write her first story after the accident. As the woman explains, "I am expected to deal with trauma by writing about it."[31] In this light, it is possible to read the "pell-mell" nature of the drawing and its white spaces in terms of the incoherence and inaccessibility of the accident.[32] After the session, the woman scribbles her account of the session on a gift bag she finds in her car; although she puts off writing up these notes until the last moment, she does in the end have a story to give her therapist at the next session. Interestingly, the reader is made a collaborator in this process in the sense that by the time we have finished reading, the story is written.

Voicing Silence in Narration

The discussion of "Behind the Curtain" earlier in this essay addressed the problem of how a narrator gives readers access to feelings or reactions that are not spoken within the time and place of the events. In that story, the narrator's interior monologue voices her objections to the position in which she finds herself in the emergency ward, a place where orderlies lean against her stretcher and chat, oblivious to her presence behind the curtain. Another

[30] Canton, *The Pink House*, 84.
[31] Canton, *The Pink House*, 86.
[32] Canton, *The Pink House*, 84.

story, "The Woman in the Red Coat," turns to the scene of the accident itself and the narrator's questions about the driver of the car, as well as the woman he was picking up:

> What kind of man drives off like that and leaves me here?
> …
> I wonder.
> Did she ask him when she got into the car? Did he answer?
> "Do you know what happened?"
> Silence.[33]

Here, the interior monologue replays the narrator's efforts to understand what happened and conveys emotion that might otherwise have remained unspoken and unprocessed. The accident was violent; the driver accelerated senselessly even after he had struck her, and the woman who came out to his car did not stop to look in her direction.[34] The tone of this internal voice – shocked, speechless, angry, vaguely ironical – is both a response to, and a symptom of, the violence and aggression of the accident. In the narrator's imaginings, the accident also has destructive effects on the relationship of the couple who drove away from the scene:

> How was that ride back home? How was it for them?
> Silent.
> No talking.
> Fearful. Afraid that if they spoke about me left behind on the sidewalk their world would come crumbling down.[35]

Drawn from the concluding lines of "The Woman in the Red Coat," these questions and imagined responses anticipate the story of "The Driver." Told from different points of view, these two stories function like companion pieces. Narrated in the first person, "The Woman in the Red Coat" gives no access to that woman's thoughts, whereas "The Driver," narrated in the third person, gives some access, particularly when she first gets into the car.[36]

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[33] Canton, *The Pink House*, 45–46.
[34] Canton, *The Pink House*, 46–47.
[35] Canton, *The Pink House*, 48.
[36] Canton, *The Pink House*, 66.

The curious thing about the third person narration of "The Driver" is that it does not feel entirely "external" to the time and place of the events. The story opens with a line that seems to be told from the point of view of someone left behind: "They drove off. The vehicle moved away slowly."[37] This "someone" is present elsewhere in the story in the form of the driver's concerned references to the "poor woman … lying there on the sidewalk."[38] However, here, in the opening lines, she is the focalizer, the eyes through which the third-person narrator sees the action. What is more, the opening lines of "The Driver" recall a line in "Because of Leonard Cohen," earlier in the series of stories, where the woman character – who is also a writer and a narrator – struggles to recall the scene of the accident:

> She paused. "I don't know, but I think I remember a woman getting into the red SUV and then the vehicle slowly moving away." *I was lying on the ground*.[39]

This recursiveness within the series of stories, typical of the repetition Whitehead identifies in trauma fiction, has for the reader the effect of an echo. Insofar as it is not always entirely clear in "The Driver" who is speaking, whose words are emerging from silence, it is possible to hear the voice of the woman writer alongside, and in concert with, that of the third-person narrator.

The problem of identifying who is speaking is also a function of the use of free indirect discourse. The latter occurs in moments where the narrator seems to inhabit a character's point of view and to speak from within their thoughts rather than simply describing their world. Consider the following example from "The Driver":

> Just before they drove away from the Bell Centre, he had been preoccupied by the big crowd that had gathered by his vehicle. As soon as his wife was in the passenger seat, he signalled left. The car began to move before she had had time to buckle her seat belt. But he drove ever so slowly. Out of guilt maybe? No, the

[37] Canton, *The Pink House*, 65.
[38] Canton, *The Pink House*, 70.
[39] Canton, *The Pink House*, 26, emphasis in the original.

> police officer had taken down his contact information and said he could leave.[40]

The words "Out of guilt maybe?" give the reader pause insofar as they break with the third-person narrator's description of the driver's experience. These words are not articulated from the point of view of either the driver (the primary focalizer) or the woman in the car (an occasional focalizer) – or, indeed, from that of an all-knowing narrator. Conveyed in free indirect discourse without quotation marks or narrative framing, they seem to come from someone within the time and place of the story. Once again, the reader is reminded of the person left behind on the sidewalk, the woman who has an incomplete picture of the traumatic event and who is trying to understand.

A further example from "The Driver" suggests a similar connection: "He tried to slow down his thoughts, to subdue his emotions. Why was *he* complaining? A woman nearly died tonight. She may be in a wheelchair for life. And he would never be the same."[41] The words "Why was *he* complaining?" offer another instance of free indirect discourse. Embedded within the third-person narration, focalized here through the driver, they not only raise the question of who is speaking but also open an interface between the narrator and the driver. Given the evidence discussed above of an overlap between the narrator and the woman writer who has survived the accident, this story can be read as a creative strategy for the woman writer to see the world from the perspective of those responsible.

Difficult Emotion (By Way of Conclusion)

What does it mean for a woman writer to create a story with such porous relations between writer, narrator, and focalizing characters, a story told in part through the eyes of the driver whose car jammed her legs between her bumper and his, and through those of the woman who walked right by her without stopping? "The Driver" can be read as an exploration of difficult emotion, both of the couple in the car and, more obliquely, through the porous narrative relations, of the woman who survived the accident. The story resonates with anger, frustration, and resentment, but also with care and concern on the part of the woman toward her husband, and on the part of the husband

[40] Canton, *The Pink House*, 65.

[41] Canton, *The Pink House*, 67, emphasis in the original.

toward the woman he hit. It speaks – at the level of the narration and at the level of the storyline – of the desire for some kind of exchange. When the driver's wife tells him he is "going to have to talk about what happened,"[42] his response is silence, racked by paralyzing guilt. But the reader has access to his thoughts and specifically to questions such as "Why was *he* complaining?"[43] which seem to be raised simultaneously by the character (the driver) and by the narrator (potentially focalized through the woman lying on the sidewalk).

At the level of the narration, the desire for some form of exchange makes sense in terms of the woman writer-narrator's need to know that the driver was also affected by the accident, that he thinks of the woman on the sidewalk in the blue coat, and that he is self-reflexive about what he did. In addition to exploring the impact of the accident on the driver, the story indirectly forgives him through the words of his wife: "I'm sure the woman knows that you didn't mean to hurt her."[44] In this sense, writing about the accident from the perspective of the driver and the woman in the red coat allows the woman writer-narrator a different understanding of the accident. Such a creative understanding arguably brings a measure of healing insofar as it puts into words what might otherwise have remained locked in silence – not just for the man who cannot speak about the accident but also for the woman writer-narrator.

As I mentioned earlier, not all of the stories in *The Pink House and Other Stories* address the accident and its repercussions. There are other questions – of love, rifts, and bonds between generations, troubled gender relations, the return to Italy, the chaos of the quotidian, and connections among Montrealers – that are equally pressing. It might be argued that the present essay focuses too narrowly on the six stories related to the accident and that, in analyzing the links among those stories, it overestimates the continuities between the figure of the woman writer, her characters, and her narrators. Yet much of the publicity surrounding this collection focuses on the process of writing and the therapeutic value of making marks on pages, whether in writing or in soft pastels. Marguerite Dakin's announcement of its 2018 launch is titled "Healing Through Writing: Licia Canton's *The Pink House and Other Stories*," and Leigh Kinch-Pedrosa's book review mentions Canton's blog post, which "describes using writing as a cure, a form of 'narrative therapy.'"[45]

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[42] Canton, *The Pink House*, 68.

[43] Canton, *The Pink House*, 67.

[44] Canton, *The Pink House*, 72.

[45] Kinch-Pedrosa, "Review: *The Pink House*."

Similarly, Annalisa Bonomo titles a key section of her critical essay "Licia Canton's Fiction between Storytelling and 'Narrative Therapy.'"[46] It is in this spirit that I have pursued my interest in the forms of incoherence that accompany the writing of trauma. Silence, in the six stories I have discussed, is often a vector of emotion pointing in several directions at once, and a way of gesturing toward what a character does not yet know or cannot yet say. I hope that other readers are able to build on what I have done here to think about the way silence resonates across Canton's stories.

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