WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY
MAP
LITERARY

PAMELA WOOLFORD

This Is What Happened

A Memoir Written in the Third Person

This is the true story of what happened, or something that happened, after her father died. She had given him CPR until the paramedics arrived to pronounce him dead, so it was a traumatic ending. Now she lived with her mother at their family home where she had cared for him round-the-clock the last months of his life. It had been three months since his death, and she told people she was writing.

But she wasn't.

She was 45 years old and single and unemployed. She had a background in PR and

marketing, and she wrote well, so she put her skills to good use: she placed a profile on a dating website.

She wrote answers to the ten narrative questions and answered literally hundreds of multiple-choice questions. She would send a few messages that were very brief because it was a site that didn't have "winks" or "smiles" or "flirts" or the like, and she believes men should send the first real message. The site uses profile information to compare personality traits of participants of the same sex, sexual preference, and age. Apparently she was much more old-fashioned, arrogant, and ambitious than the other 45-year-old straight women and much less kinky, adventurous, and spiritual.

She didn't know how kinky other women her age were, but not adventurous and not spiritual were no surprise. How the website determined adventurousness was anybody's guess, but the spirituality questions were pretty straight forward. For the multiple choice "How important is religion/God in your life?" she chose "Not at all important" and wrote the explanation, "I'm agnostic." The question "Do you put more weight in science or faith?" had three possible answers: "Science," "Faith," or "Equally in both."

She chose "Science."

She began her search. "Your profile is endearing and sharp," she wrote to a 50-year-old photojournalist who called himself ClickworthyMan.

"[T]he words endearing and sharp pumped up my ego…[a]nd you sound great," he replied. But he had "started dating someone recently."

To guyinflow, a 55-year-old (or so he wrote, she later learned he was 58) entertainment lawyer turned producer, she wrote, "Powerful snippet of you."

"[T]hat short email had/has me paying attention…how could I not, as after reading what you shared about yourself [in your profile]," he returned in a longish message ending with "I am throwing stupid rules to the wind, and giving you info here about me…." Info that included

his full name, his phone number, his email address, his blog site address, and the website address for a documentary he was making.

She did a Google images search of him, and there along with his photos popped up photos of Meg Ryan, whose film he executive produced, and Deepak Chopra, whose event he executive produced.

Deepak Chopra, she thought, *mister spirituality,* and she took another peek at his lengthy profile. She was looking for a grounded man who liked the arts, like a photojournalist or an ex-lawyer with a creative side. He had described himself as a man "who lives for the passion of creativity, and yet who is very traditional and grounded in many respects." *Sounds good,* she thought.

He was "attracted to 'out-of-the-box' women," he wrote *(That's me,* she thought), "who are comfortable combining sensuality with spirituality." *(Huh?)*

"Someone who believes in serendipity and synchronicity because they manifest themselves in her life constantly…someone who believes in FAITH… [emphasis his]." *(Uh-oh.)*

She was hesitant, especially since he had answered next to none of the manifold multiple-choice questions, and he lived in New York and she lived in Maryland, so they couldn't casually meet for coffee.
Two days later, she was on the site and received the Instant Message "hello?" It was from him, guyinflow. She thought he seemed disappointed that she had not written him back. "[W]ill you write me back? Do you want to talk on the phone?" he asked at the end of the chat.

"I wrote you a long email," he said, "would love to get more of a sense of you of course. You reached out to me, so I assumed you were intrigued."

His eagerness and her hesitancy left her feeling responsible for him—emotionally. She

speculated that she was easily scared because she had helped take care of her parents for years. She worried that he might be needy. And then there was the whole spirituality/ “serendipity and synchronicity” thing.

The next day she wrote him a four-sentence email hoping he had “an amazing day yesterday with the opening of your play” and telling him he had “a wonderfully open side” and ending with “I think, though, we might not be a romantic match.”

She wasn’t sure whether sending the email was a good decision (in an always-listen-to-your-intuition-especially-online way) or a bad one (in a you’re-making-snap-judgments-and-this-is-why-you’re-single way). So two days after that, she wrote him a five-sentence email ending with a how-about-let’s-be-friends sentiment. He didn’t reply.

The next day she received the following message from an EverestDB1966: “OMG - and that says something coming from an atheist - er, umm, I mean agnostic, like me. You seem terrific. Full of life, dynamic, bright, insightful, not to mention radiant. Please do write me back. Everest”. His name was Everest, like the mountain.

She looked at his profile and was excited. He was a 46-year-old corporate lawyer who lived in her hometown and liked to go to New York for shows. In his photos he looked stylish and happy with a big toothy grin.

She wrote him right away, thanking him for his message and said, “It was lovely to get. Your profile's quite attractive, downright adorable...,” which was the boldest compliment she had ever paid a man online, but it felt right.

She had a rule against talking to an online date on the phone before meeting him in person, a rule which she broke for hours and over several days before they met at a lakeside coffee shop that Saturday. After cold drinks and a shared hummus platter, he invited her to pick fruit, so she broke another rule and rode in his car to a farm in a nearby town. They picked strawberries. Afterwards he bought a bottle of champagne, which they had with the strawberries outdoors.

He made a quick stop at his house before taking her home. He had photos of himself and his kids and his best friends since college and their families framed on the wall. He was apologetic about ending the date to pick up his children, but he hoped to get a babysitter the following Saturday and take her out again. She was happy.

But by the next day, he had hidden his online profile. He never called her about the next weekend. She never saw him again.

In their first conversations, he had told her he couldn't talk to her without smiling. They had laughed a lot. Early on she said, "I don't know what will happen romantically, but I already like you." She told him she was drawn to him.

In one conversation, he referred to her as "this person I care about." Once, he walked her through a stressful day he had, and she listened, and he sent her a message the next day thanking her.

He asked her questions that she avoided, and then she told him, succinctly, about her father; about finding him after the stroke; about the coma and his emergence from it; about her being in the room at the rehab facility when a healthcare worker rolled him on his side on an undulating mattress to ready him, a man unable to use his limbs, for bathing then turned her back and let go of him, leaving him to drop to the floor; about the severity of the resulting neurological damage; and about the trach and feeding tube. He told her how special she was before they hung up that night. An insomniac whose care for her father also had not allowed time for her to sleep through the night, she thought about Everest as she fell asleep that night and had her first good night's sleep in perhaps a year. She awoke with him in her thoughts.

Two weeks after her date with Everest, after two unreturned texts to him (one thanking him for the date and one with the message "Is everything okay? Didn't hear from you and your profile's gone."), she went on a coffee-shop date with another man from the site, screen name mike3679.

His screen name was Mike, but his real name wasn't. He was a 41-year-old public defender who loved the performing arts. And he was sincere and nice, in-person and on paper ("I am working at a job I love and trying to make a difference," he wrote), but there was no spark, and it was their only date.

The writing that she told people she was doing but wasn't was work on a novel about how the arts intersect and affect two characters' lives. Since her father's death, she found concentration—and productivity in general—difficult. For some time she didn't write or even read, but she watched movies. She usually watched a film or films every day, her effort in coping with bad memories, bad dreams, her screams in the night, her calling out "Dad" in the day—what she knew enough to suspect were signs of PTSD. A U.S. Veterans Affairs online-test result advised her to see a doctor about the disorder. She didn't.

She tried to drown her sorrows in online dating and Netflix watching. But there still remained the grief, and perhaps, undeniable remorse (remorse emanating from the fact that she so often had been there: there, hearing him fall to the floor in the next room as he got out of bed the night of his stroke and her wondering what mischief he was up to; there, hearing the grunts of his attempts to call out as he lay there immobile and speechless and her thinking he was having another bad dream; there, seeing him slip into a coma in the emergency room and her not processing that it was happening or talking to him as it did; there, deciding to transfer him from the hospital to Genesis HealthCare Woodside rehab center and her not using the miracle of his newfound consciousness, which neurosurgeons had said would not happen, to consult with him about the decision for him to go to the facility before coming home; there, visiting him at the facility for hours a day, witnessing treatment that kept her up at night and put knots in her stomach, and her sending an email, making phone calls, correcting workers, posting a sign, and meeting with the director and nursing director rather than getting him out of the facility; there, seeing him improperly turned onto his side by the facility's worker and her not stopping the worker before the worker turned and left him there to drop to the floor; there, hearing his head hit the floor and her not calling 911 when the facility did not do it soon enough; there, caring for him all those months and her not saying and doing things she thought to say and do only after he

was dead).

Which he was. Dead. And she felt the finality of his being dead. But her mother felt his presence all the time. “He’s always helping me,” her mother told her. Once her mother lost her car keys, and she and her mother searched for the keys for some time to no avail. Eventually a friend gave them a ride to where they were going. The next morning her mother had found the keys. “I told your father he would have to ask God where the keys are,” her mother said, “and he told me, ‘You’re not going to like this,’” she continued in an amused tone, “‘but those keys are in the trash.’” So her mother went through the kitchen trashcan when she got up that morning, and there they were.

She did not experience what her mother did. Her father had left her with many good memories along with the haunting ones laced with regret, but he was gone. She told her mother that to her he was gone altogether (she and her mother had talked like this, about their beliefs, for years). If he were not gone, he would find a way to help me move on, she told her mother, but that sort of thing only happens in a movie. She said “a movie” or some equivalent like “the movies” or “a film.”

And then one night or maybe the same night, she had a thought just before going up to her mother’s room to say goodnight. She remembered that her paternal grandmother was said to have accidentally smothered her baby by sleeping with the infant in her bed. She had not heard this until well after her grandmother’s death and had barely thought about it since, but when she was a child, she would sometimes sleep with her head under the covers, and her grandmother would warn her not to do that. Standing in her mother’s room, she recalled that and told her mother that thinking about the remorse her grandmother must have lived with somehow helped her with her own. The memory was so out of the blue, she thought. It felt like an anonymous gift.

She left her mother’s room and went to lie in bed to watch a rented DVD, *The Other Woman.* From the description, she expected a movie about a mistress who becomes a wife and struggles to build a relationship with her stepson, which the movie was. It was also, she soon learned, the story of a woman who was grieving the death of her child, Isabelle. Since

her father's death, she tended to avoid movies about grieving the death of a loved one, but she liked this one as she watched it.

"I know Billy's here whenever I think of him," another grieving mother says to the protagonist, whose name is Amelia. "Don't you feel that about Isabelle?"

"She's gone," Amelia says. "I know the difference between here and gone."

Then, over an hour into the film, something happened. Something happened in the film, and something happened to her as she watched it.

Amelia's husband says to her, "Do you know why you fell in love with me?"

"When I first saw you, it was," Amelia says, "it was like I recognized you."

"Yeah, 'recognized me.' That's probably right. Your father, Amelia. That's who you recognized."

"You are nothing like my father," Amelia says.

"Are you kidding me? I'm just like him. I'm a lawyer…."

Watching the film and hearing this line, she thought of herself and her search online. Her father was a lawyer, like Everest ("I'm drawn to you," she had said) and mike3679 and guyinflow for that matter, and the similarities had crossed her mind before. In fact her mother had said twice, in separate conversations about each of her two coffee-shop dates, words like "Your father was like that."

But that's not *what happened.* What happened was to follow.

Amelia, who said her dead baby was gone and not here and who was drawn to a lawyer who was like her father, says to her husband Jack, "I killed [Isabelle]….I told you, and I told

the police that I found her in the bassinet, but I lied. She fell asleep in my arms. I had her head in my hand and her face pressed against me. I fell asleep and….”

“No, you did not smother her,” Jack says.

“I did, Jack,” Amelia says.

Watching this scene and thinking of that sudden memory of her own grandmother, she found herself sitting upright to focus more on the screen because--and for her it sounds inaccurate to say, but it was true--she felt her father’s presence in the room, so much so that as she sat up she wrapped her sheet around herself for modesty because she slept without any clothes.

She stared at the screen. The protagonist Amelia is on the street, looking up from browsing a vendor’s table to see, unexpectedly, her father standing at the end of the street. He looks at Amelia sheepishly and raises his hand to wave.

Watching the screen in awe from her bed, she, without thinking, slowly lifted her own hand and waved back at what felt to her in that moment like a wave from her own father.

Then the next words spoken on the screen are said by Amelia’s father to his daughter: “You look like you saw a ghost….”

She continued to watch intently.

In the next scene, Amelia is at a doctor’s office, where the doctor informs Amelia that based on the medical facts it would have been impossible that the baby died from smothering.

“Are you listening?” the doctor says. “…I need to know that you understand what I’m saying, so I’m going to repeat this until you say that you understand….

“It’s no one’s fault. It’s not your fault. You didn’t do anything wrong. Do you understand?”

Sitting there upright in bed, transfixed by the film, she heard this message, something she logically already knew, but in that moment, in that moment then, she felt that her father had sent her the words, and that made a difference. She slept well that night.

In her online profile she had not written much about what kind of man she was looking for ("...I don't have a checklist: if we click, we click"), but she wrote of her love of the arts and *New Yorker* articles, her need for laughter, and her desire for magic ("I'm looking for magic even though I pretend I'm not."). She listed her favorite literature and her favorite musical artists (Henri Salvador, Nat King Cole...) and wrote of her admiration for honorability and compassion ["I've pondered why wanderlust and worldliness (although attractive traits) are etched here more exquisitely than honorability, compassion...."].

In the last years of his life before his illness, before his death at 81, her father would watch films with her. They would share *New Yorker* articles and joke and laugh. They would read aloud together and sing Nat King Cole's "Straighten Up and Fly Right" and walk to the natural market and get sorbet and ice cream at the mall. They were playful in their conversation in a way that, more than once, made a stranger who was eavesdropping smile. At home she would tell him she loved him, and he would say, "Okay." He would pass her mother things her mother needed when her mother was nearly bedridden for a year, and he would help her mother with the bedpan and sleep in a chair by her mother's bedside when she wanted and read to her mother scripture and about Zora Neale Hurston when she asked. In those years her father had dementia, which diminished his ability to consistently perform familiar tasks well or safely. She, his daughter, would help him choose his clothes for the day. He did not like to wear white socks or blue jeans. He was no longer driving, but one day when she was visiting her mother, who was then hospitalized, she looked up from her mother's hospital bed to see her father standing in the doorway, dressed in a suit. He had chosen his outfit and driven himself to be by his wife's side.

Her father was honorable and compassionate. He appreciated literature and the arts, had been an actor in community theater having studied in college under acting titan Roscoe Lee Browne, and he shared his daughter's sense of humor. He was a lawyer and a human

rights advocate. He had traits like the men she looked for online. But she was not looking for her father. She had wanted to be a lawyer as a child, and several of her female friends had gone to law school and accomplished things she admired. She surrounded herself with people she admired. Years ago, she had learned a lesson that she shared with a friend at the time: when I think I want something from a man, she said, I inevitably realize it is something I want from myself. She wasn't looking for her father; she was looking for what they had in common and what she hoped to be; she was looking for herself.

The novel she wasn't working on was not the first novel she didn't write. There was another one, both without contracts, but the other one, Pulitzer Prize winner Edward P. Jones thought would "one day afford her the acclaim that comes to few first novelists." He said so in a letter of recommendation for a grant. She didn't get the grant. She didn't finish the book, not because she didn't get the grant. There were always reasons not to finish a book, some better than others: ill parents, trouble concentrating, second guessing oneself.... It's an endless list filled with fine reasons. And her father understood that. In many ways he was an accepting man. After she dropped out of college before her fourth and last year, his only reaction was to say "you know you can go to law school with three years of college." When she announced in her early twenties that she was now a writer, though she had not actually written anything in her adult life, he placed a photo on his desk that he had taken of her as a child getting *Roots* signed by the author Alex Haley. He was always proud and never pushed.

He was quiet, intellectual, and funny in a way that made people like him; when he opened his mouth, which wasn't always often, he made people think and made people laugh.

In the 1950s he was a partner in one of Baltimore's early Black law firms, Howard, Woolford, and Leeds. His secretary from the firm heard about his death and came to his funeral. She told his wife that she completed her college education because of his example. On the day of his funeral, fellow lawyers, family and friends, and former classmates from public school to law school told stories with things in common about how he helped them, he was quiet and just, and he made them laugh. His son spoke about his sense of humor and was visibly shaken when he looked back on his father's life. "This was a sense of humor that...

persevered [despite] the times that he lived in," he said. When their father first applied for jobs in the federal government, their father was told, we don't hire blacks as lawyers, which was then legal.

Their father became the first black attorney in the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) at the Social Security Administration, where he spent the bulk of his career. A cousin talked about how he would check in on his aunt, the cousin's mother, during lunch breaks—a fact even the attorney's wife had not known. A lawyer who worked with him at OGC called him a mentor to her and her co-workers. She said he stood up for others. They would come to his office daily, she said, for counsel on navigating the workplace and moving up. "We just loved him."

These were, perhaps, ordinary stories, the kind of pleasant memories related at a funeral, about, maybe, an ordinary man, or maybe an extraordinary one, extraordinary for the similar impression he left on so many.

Most of the stories, his daughter who was with him when he died had not heard before this. But she had been left with an indelible impression in his presence even as a small child who was shy, and quiet like him. In the early '70s, a friend of her mother's once saw the father and daughter engaged in banter and was struck by the little girl's humor. The friend later remarked about it to her mother, who was surprised to hear that her child was funny. She was funny when she was with her dad, the girl explained. She felt smarter as well—more clever. They had a special way of joking even then. It was like belonging to their own private Algonquin Round Table for two. But the experience was sometimes a fleeting one, and eventually that part of their relationship was gone to her for decades as she got older. But in his old age, after having mini-strokes, two things happened, which were not necessarily related: his personality changed (from the strokes, doctors suggested) and he stopped drinking alcohol, which had tended to make him unhappy and unpleasant. In the last decade of his life before his illness, he was more appreciative and peaceful than she had ever known him. And the magic of their time together when she was a child came back in spades. She had experienced no friendship like it. It was why strangers would sometimes eavesdrop and smile.

“He will always be remembered as a gentleman of honor, integrity, and wit,” one longtime friend, the wife of a law school classmate, said at the funeral. What made people laugh with him was not *what* he said, his daughter realized, but his ability to engage someone in repartee. It was *how* he said it, and how he it made the other person feel. She liked the fact that that Algonquin Round Table was often built for two.

A few days after the funeral, a letter which there was no reason to expect arrived for his widow. It was from Senator Barbara Mikulski and made her and others wonder if the senator had known her father or just heard of him. It said, among other things, "...Mr. Woolford set high standards for performance in both his professional and his personal life and inspired others to conform to his expectations. He was from the old school and valued the traditional American virtues of honesty, hard work and fair play. He practiced them every day of his life. I often wonder if we will ever see his like again...."

“His like” we could wonder about though he himself was gone, his daughter who was with him when he died thought. But even in death he still wanted his daughter to be content, or she imagined he did. He would help me move on from grief if he could, she had said.

In the film *The Other Woman,* the protagonist says something woke her the night her child died, and the thing that woke her was the sound of a cell phone (“Then something woke me up, and she was gone.”).
Those last months, she, the protagonist of our true story, slept on the couch by her father’s bedside so that she could hear him when he needed assistance. On the night of her father’s death, she woke once from a sound and later woke again to the quiet of a room with him dead.

She was his primary caretaker with the assistance of periodic visits from a doctor; visits, normally weekly, from a nurse; and her mother. She and her father basically lived in the living room—him on a hospital bed—which had been overtaken with medical equipment, shelves of medicines and supplies she used for his care (Texas urinary catheters, gauze for bandaging, trach cleaning kits, baby wipes...), and objects to stimulate and entertain him

(classical music CDs, photos of loved ones, and oils with the aromas of his favorite fruits, pineapple and orange). There was continual and at times profound noise from machines, which variously included the hiss, beeps, or rumble of oxygen delivery, a respiratory humidifier, a nebulizer, the machine to suction his trach, a pulse-ox, the feeding tube pump, and a low-air-loss alternating pressure mattress. (Before his illness, her father had told her and her mother that he would want everything possible done for him in any medical state. She, as well, had said that about herself.)

The night of his death, when she awoke for the second time, the machines were on, but the room was too quiet. There was a difference that struck her and made her get up with a start. She found him motionless with no pulse or breath. She yelled for her mother to call 911. “I think he’s dead,” the daughter said as she pulled the plug from the mattress to deflate it and begin CPR. When the paramedics arrived, one told her to stop. He said the body was cold.

It had been a strange, long day the day before—even given the strangeness of the weeks and months, and really year, while he was ill before his death—because of the multitude of ways in which her father’s health was failing and the severity and look of what was happening to his body. At one point in the night, she was awakened by the familiar sound of his coughing, which indicated he needed to have his trach suctioned. It had been longer between the time she lay down and the cough that awoke her than she had expected. She got up, and there was a look from him she later remembered as one of appreciation and attentiveness. He was glad to see her, and the moment was a gift.

There was a point in his illness, just after the coma, when so much of his life was about progress—talking and focusing on photographs and purposefully using his limbs, watching television again—but after he was dropped to the floor in the rehab facility his life went from one of progress to one of struggle. Communication with words was gone, though he continually tried, and a purposeful look or movement was more rare.

Some moments when he did connect, and the expression of his eyes, later became haunting memories for his daughter after he was dead. She should have responded more,

she should have encouraged him more, she thought. It was, so often, what made her call out the word “Dad” during the day.

At the rehab center for six weeks, he was not permitted to use his trach speaking valve, which enabled others to hear him when he spoke, until that sixth week, the week in which he was dropped. The ease and joy which were so much a part of his personality began to give way, first, to sadness when he was at the facility (though he still smiled when his daughter joked). And after he was dropped, it gave way to a new frustration, a new resignation, and most often, an inexpressive look in his eyes. It was a look that made nurses and aides at hospitals (he spent months back and forth in them after the incident) inquire with his daughter if he were cognizant. His smile was mostly gone.

But there was something different about that last night and the way he looked at her. That whole last week, in fact, he had shown reactions and enjoyment, expressed them in his face, as a result of contact and conversation (back rubs felt, playful joking with him heard…) in a surprisingly increased amount, as his body (his systems, his skin, the flesh of his feet and legs) degraded more and more. She came to believe that he had coughed that last time to wake her up, to say goodbye. It was, perhaps, his last sound, and she thought it took him longer because it was what he had left—the cough and the look—and it took effort.

After the incident at the rehab center, his ability to speak and give a purposeful facial expression was not immediately diminished. A brain bleed spread gradually from the injury. For a period, perhaps a day or two, during the resulting hospital stay, he was visibly nervous each time his body was turned on its side as it was when he was dropped, though in the hospital he was being turned by more than one healthcare worker and he was in a bed with a railing. His daughter and at least one nurse took note of his unease. He remembered what happened.

His daughter worked to bring him home by training with nurses in ICU, caring for him at the hospital, finding a home healthcare doctor and arranging for other home health, getting prescriptions, and finding ways to order equipment and supplies. But eventually, as her

father's ability to express himself drifted, she began to wonder if he would even understand that he was home once she and her mother got him there. After a draining two-month period, he was discharged to her care. She cried brief tears of joy when she received that call.

He arrived from the nearly twenty-mile ambulance ride soiled and expressionless. She told him he was home, and he showed no response. She cleaned him and changed his linen and gown. Then something happened both she and her mother will never forget: in a manner more purposeful and pronounced than she had seen from him since the incident eight weeks earlier, he moved his head and neck slowly and scanned the living room and the hallway staircase beyond it with his eyes. Then his face showed a newfound peace, and he closed his eyes and kept that expression. He knew he was home.

And as he knew that, his daughter later thought, he may have known the night he was dying that he was leaving home and said goodbye.

What happened the night his daughter watched the film affected her. Yet her spirituality and idea of death did not change, or did not change much. When her mother told her she had found the car keys, she knew then and still knew that her mother was likely the one to have put them in the trash in the first place. But later, just after she watched the film, she came to believe that her father wanted her to write the story of it all, although she generally did not write about herself. And so, this is what happened. It took her weeks to get started —but she finally did—and more than two years to finish. It was the first piece she wrote with her PTSD symptoms. Early on, she felt her father's presence encouraging her. Or maybe she was encouraging herself. She did not know.

Pamela Woolford writes fiction, literary journalism and, since authoring "This Is What Happened," memoir. She has written more than 100 pieces published in Harvard University's *Transition, Poets*

& Writers Magazine, and the fiction anthology *Amazing Graces* (Paycock Press, 2012) and extensively in *The Baltimore Sun,* among other publications. Her current project is a multidiscipline memoir, *Meditations on a Marriage,* which is a book (represented by the Carol Mann Agency) with an accompanying short film, a film about a dance about a book about emotional abuse. Woolford was a 2016 Tucson Festival of Books Literary Awards finalist and longlisted for the 2016 Fish Publishing Short Memoir Prize for excerpts from the project. She is a Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award winner for screenwriting, a recipient of a citation from the Maryland House of Delegates for her journalism, and was a 2014 Rick DeMarinis Short Fiction Contest semifinalist at *Cutthroat, A Journal of the Arts.* Two of her short stories are nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize, one by novelist and Pushcart Prize editor Mark Wisniewski. Woolford would like to note that her father's name, which does not appear in the above piece about him, "This Is What Happened," is Llewellyn Washington Woolford, Sr. More about Woolford's work can be found at www.about.me/pamelawoolford.

published by

The MFA in Creative and Professional Writing Program
Department of Language, Literature, Culture, and Writing
College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
The William Paterson University of New Jersey