



Elena's Seclusion (A Short Story)

Lydia Fazio Theys

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This story was originally published in Day One, a weekly literary journal dedicated to short fiction and poetry from emerging writers.

When they met in college, Terry thought that Elena was merely shy. But what started as social anxiety evolved over the years. Now Elena's agoraphobia and paranoia have taken over both their lives. As Terry struggles to care for his dependent wife, he watches as his own world shrinks bit by bit.

One summer afternoon, Elena lies down for a nap and doesn't get up. Devoted Terry is distraught over his wife's death, and although he would never admit it—not even to himself—he's perhaps a little relieved. Yet it seems that Elena hasn't fully realized that she is dead, and Terry is left trying to understand this new, disturbing predicament. Chillingly relatable, *Elena's Seclusion* explores the boundary between loving and smothering, guilt and responsibility, selflessness and self-delusion.

Revised edition: This edition of *Elena's Seclusion* includes editorial revisions.

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