

“Bananas”
by Frank Cavano, M.D.

Chair tilted, I sat with my back to the glazed winter window.

Max was not speaking, not with words, but the expression on his white, waxy face suggested that he was hallucinating again. What phantom was he painting now to flee life’s harsh realities? The answer came quickly. Had I seen the man flying down from the sky, landing in the shrubs? Sighing deeply, like any doctor noting a loss of ground in his patient’s mental status, I prepared to discuss with Max a possible increase in his medication. But Max, again speechless, pointed to the window with the certainty of a great hunting dog on point. I turned as I began to hear noises outside: boots crunching snow, bodies pushing through shrubbery and whispers and shrieks that are emitted only from human mouths.

A patient had jumped from the top floor of the hospital. I gasped but then noted that the emergency medical staff was already on the scene and in high gear. Blood rushed to Max’s cheeks now as a slight smile spoke of both relief and empathy.

Today I had read too much into Max’s facial expression and paid too much attention to his past history. Looking for symptom and sign and sweats, it was I who had not found “reality”. A familiar pearl from a favorite professor presented itself with a kindly wink: “sometimes, gentlemen, a banana is just a banana”.

Author Bio: Frank Cavano, a retired psychiatrist, writes poetry when moved by his own life experiences or by those of his patients. His poems and short stories speak to what he has learned about the healing process. They emphasize the importance of being there for those who are hurting, the importance of non-judgmental listening and the key role the Spirit can play in healing. You may reach him at: frankcavano@hargray.com