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Resolution

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RESOLUTION

Marie C. Ballance

ONE

The clock on the wall is my enemy. I am in a race against time. *If only*, I say to myself, *if only I can last five minutes I will be on my way to normalcy*. Normal people resist the urge. Normal people don't even *have* the urge. *There is no need to do this*, I say to myself. *Don't give in*. I look at my hands as they begin to shake.

TWO

My heart pounds. There is a ringing in my ears. Thoughts are racing through my brain, struggling to overpower each other. Silence is elusive; my mind yearns for peace, but it is nowhere to be found. I am trapped in a mysophobic universe. To have a moment's peace I must escape.

THREE

Those on the outside offer no help. When I offer explanation for my behavior, I receive nothing but ridicule for my pains. Ridicule goaded me into this resolution. I am convinced this is for the best. My determination is shaky at best, but I must stand firm. If I don't look at my hands, maybe they will stop trembling. Maybe they'll go away.

FOUR

Sweat drips from my forehead. I may break. My special friend calls my name in a way few understand. The voice, audible only to myself, intrudes upon my chaotic thoughts and weak determination. *Why do you resist? Give in. It's for the best. It's the only way you will find peace*. My body trembles as I announce my resolution to the empty room: "I will not break! I *will* be normal!"

FIVE

Fear, my adversary, creeps into my mind's cavern, dragging mysophobia behind him, a triumphant look in his eyes. *You are going to get sick. How many people have touched that doorknob today alone?* The name of every germ or bacteria known to man rushes toward my mind's eye like kamikaze pilots intent on their mission.

It is pointless to expect victory.

I surrender.

I move toward the sink and touch the friendly arm of the faucet.

I wash my hands.

My resolution lasted five minutes. A record.