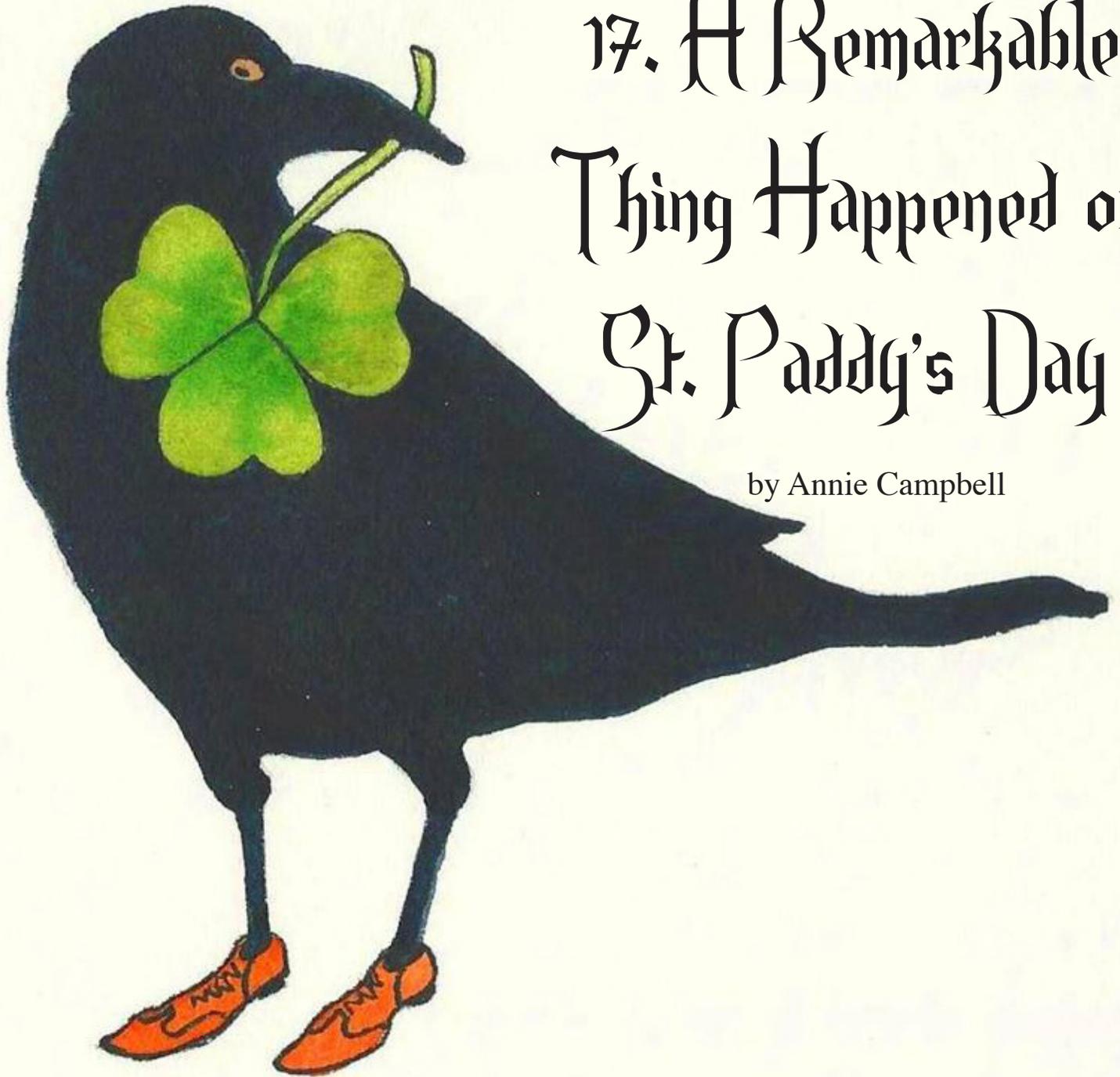


17. A Remarkable Thing Happened on St. Paddy's Day

by Annie Campbell



Nine years ago on the eve of St. Paddy's Day, a blizzard battered our old farmhouse, and rattled the windows. Harley and I bundled up, climbed into our cold car and drove slowly - barely able to see the road. We were going to meet our family in the Mumsey's hospital room. Thanks to a misdiagnosis, our Mumsey was dying. The doctors had refused to lis-

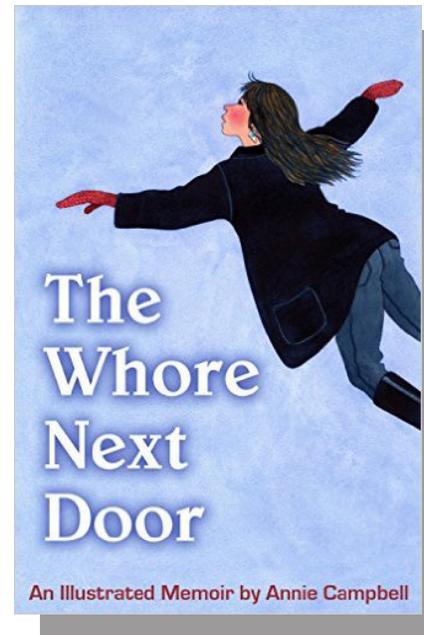
ten to anyone in the family when we told them that our Mumsey had NEVER vomited in her life, she did not have the flu- and this was something serious. When the doctors finally decided to give her a sonogram, they discovered she had a gall bladder problem, and that her violent vomiting for more than a week had ruptured her large intestine. It was too late to save our Mumsey.

The Mumsey was in a coma, and sedated. I hoped she no longer felt any pain. We gathered around her bed and told our favorite funny Mumsey-stories, and we told her how much we loved her. In the wee hours after midnight, on St. Paddy's Day, the Mumsey died at the age of 85. She had been strong and healthy, and her mind was still sharp when the doctors chose to ignore our pleas. I believe she could have lived a much longer life.

The next morning back at our farmette, after a very short sleep, I woke up to a white-world with no wind, and almost three feet of snow on the ground. The snow, on every tiny tree branch, and every bush, looked like white lace. In great contrast to the lacy whiteness, hundreds and hundreds of black birds: crows, starlings, grackles, and red-wings, sat silently in the trees. I ran to another window. The trees bordering our yard were filled with even more silent blackbirds. Finally, I ran to the window facing south, and was not surprised to see every lacey tree also filled with hundreds of blackbirds. I had never seen anything like it.

I knew that my Mumsey had something to do with it, and felt a rush of joy. I laughed with delight and thought, she is sending a message. I interpreted all the quiet black birds in their glorious lacey setting to mean – it's OK to be sad, but celebrate today, and while you're at it - celebrate every day. Suddenly, in unison, all the birds made an incredible cawing racket. They took off heading west, turning the pale sky black.

17. A Remarkable thing happened on St. Paddy's Day is NOT an excerpt from my illustrated memoir *THE WHORE NEXT DOOR*. It's a shameless attempt to get you interested in the odd things I write and paint.



If you are curious, click on the link below to see the first 10 illustrated chapters of my book on Amazon. Use the "Look Inside" feature.

I hope it amuses you!

http://www.amazon.com/Whore-Next-Door-Illustrated-Campbell-ebook/dp/B00Y423ZNO/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1438538873&sr=81&keywords=ANNIE+CAMPBELL