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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: TONI GAUTHIER; CASEY VALENTINE/ISIPHOTOS.COM; BRIAN STAUFFER; "US AND THEM," 2016. ACRYLIC, OIL, MARKER AND VINYL ON CANVAS 82 X 65 IN.; BY YULIA PINKUSEVICH/ COURTESY KENT FINE ART; JONATHAN BARTLETT



SPECIAL ONLINE FEATURE

Prescription for a Homeless Man

A physician finds a way out of the woods
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Illustration: Jonathan Burdick

Prescription for a Homeless Man

A physician finds a way out of the woods.

BY LOREN MELL, '96

Recently I took a Monday off work, my third sick day in eight years. When I returned the next day, I was surprised nobody asked what happened. Perhaps they were respecting my privacy or assumed 'tis the season for the flu. But if they had asked, I would have told them the truth; I felt depressed.

As you might guess, my mood had to do with the election. I had become mired in Facebook quicksand, exchanging rants about the electoral college system. I felt that Clinton failed to connect with heartland voters, to give voice to their

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This is so spot on.

My discomfort with money undoubtedly stems from the blessings and burdens of my childhood. I was raised in a "glass castle," broken and beset by numerous emotional and self-inflicted hardships. My parents divorced when I was 10, their tensions culminating in a heated argument at my birthday party. I remained in Oregon with my mother, while my father moved away to attend seminary. My mother and stepfather ran a small publishing company, but their real work began after hours, holding seminars and sances inspired by Jane Roberts's *The Seth Material*. My mother channeled a spirit, Myriad, who advanced the central premise that you create your own reality, a path to achieve abundance, or spiritual wealth.

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Illustration: Jonathan Burdick

At times, it seemed my parents' mission was to eschew material success, as though seeking it were a moral failing. During high school, upon returning from a retreat, my parents abruptly sold their failing business, auctioned our belongings, and packed my siblings, me and two of our cats (the others were left to their fates) into our red 1970 Volkswagen van, relocating us to a ranch