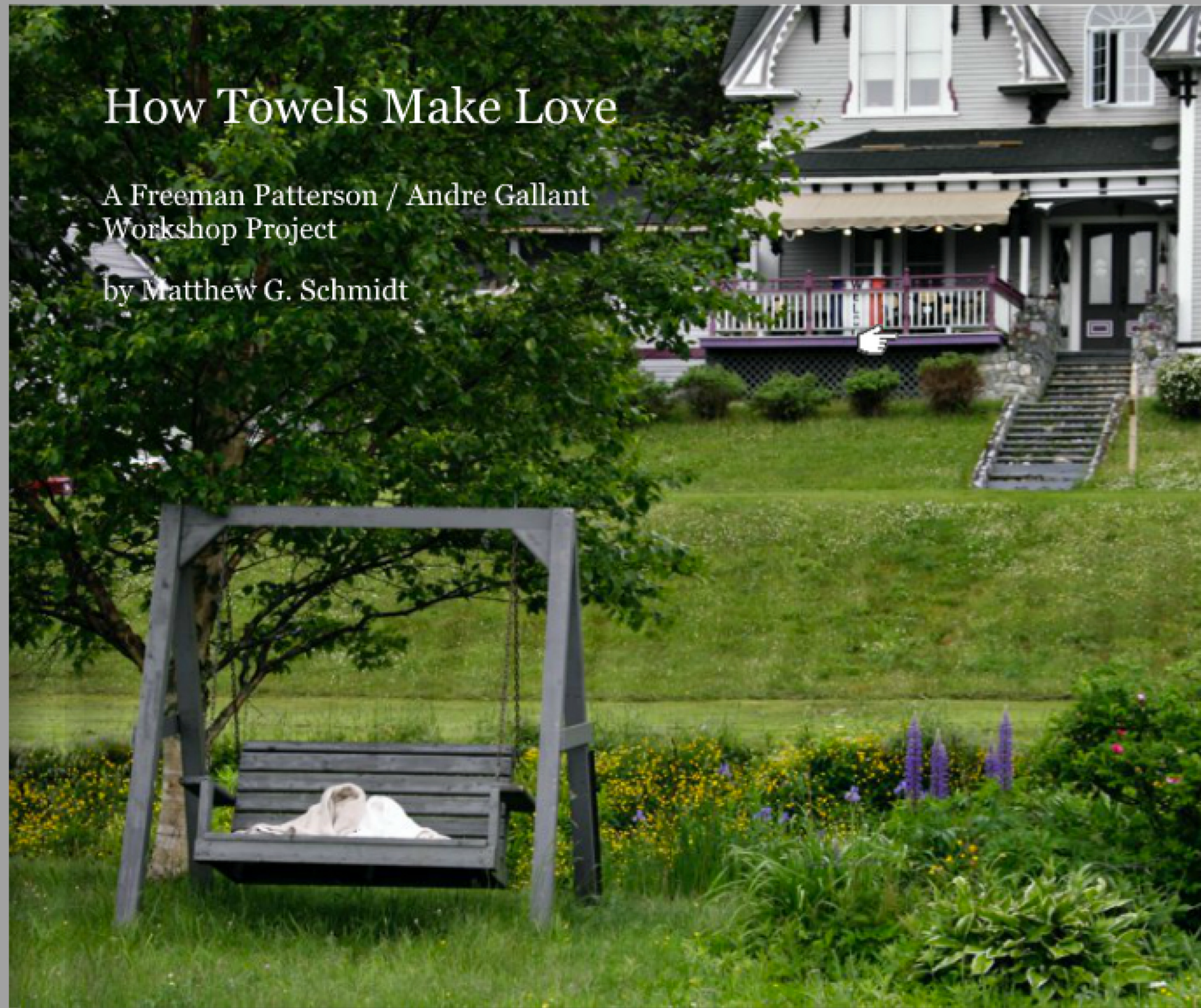


How Towels Make Love

A Freeman Patterson / Andre Gallant
Workshop Project

by Matthew G. Schmidt





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Introduction

I took a workshop from Freeman Patterson and Andre Gallant in June, 2009. The culmination of the workshop was an individual project based on a theme provided by Freeman and Andre. We received our assigned theme on Thursday evening, just before dinner. All of our images had to be taken after dinner on Thursday and completed by 12:30 on Friday. The final presentations were given at 10:00 on Saturday.

My project theme was "How Towels Make Love." I knew it would be difficult to create 15 images to represent the theme, but I was not prepared for how inspired I would become. Soon I was moving the towels all over the area around the St. Martins Country Inn and photographing them in new scenes. In the end I had many more images than I needed and it was necessary to pare them down to a series that made sense.

I was personally quite surprised at how much each of us were able to put together in such a short time period.

Special Thanks

There are a number of people I need to thank for their help in this project. My wife Lia discovered a way to fold the towels so that they resembled people and helped me to conceive and set up many of the scenes. It was also her recommendation to think of "love" as more than sexual intercourse.

The staff at the St. Martins Country Inn were extremely accommodating in our bizarre requests as the group of us tried to complete our projects.

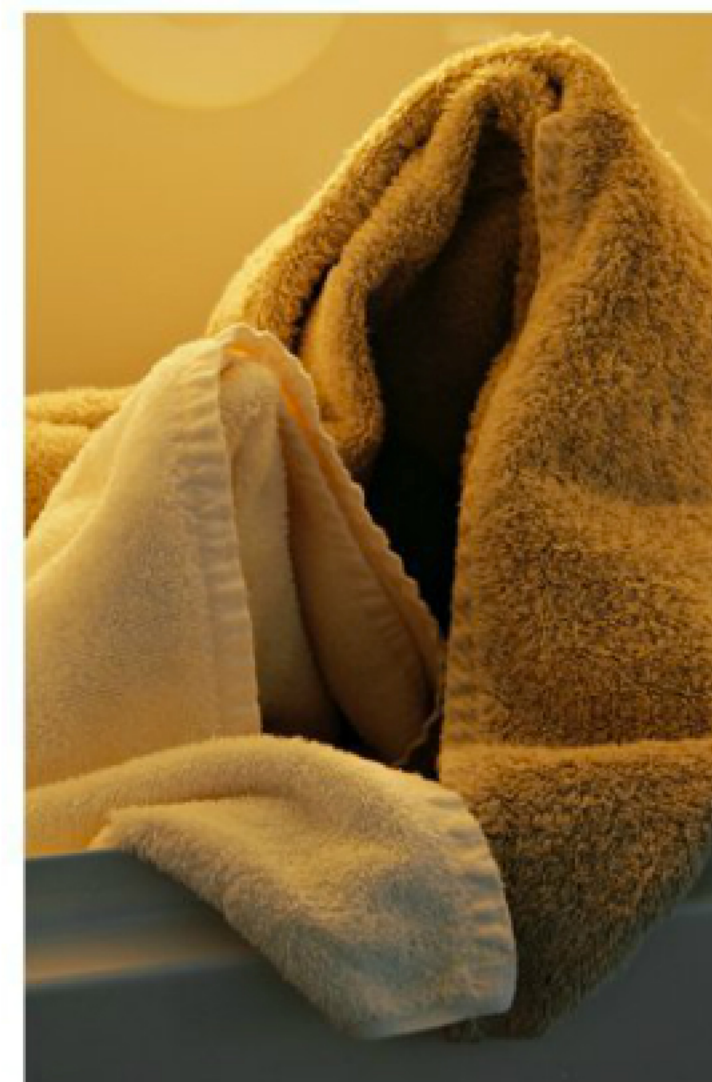
And finally, thanks to Freeman and Andre for their choice of themes, and their confidence in each of us to complete our goals.

I started this project with the thought that I would be creating a documentary depicting the mechanics of coitus amongst towels. But then I thought it would be far more interesting to show how towels make lasting love. So here is the story of Fred and Ethel, the towels.

Fred and Ethel were just normal, everyday towels from the St. Martins Country Inn. They lived in a linen closet with many close friends, but the quarters were very small and there were few amenities. They were forced to live on one shelf, with the unruly pillow cases on the shelf above them. They could hear the pillow cases partying all night long and found it difficult to get a peaceful night's rest.



One day Fred noticed Ethel in the dryer and he decided she was the most beautiful towel he had ever seen. When their drying cycle was complete, he helped her out of the dryer and into the basket where they could be fluffed and folded. Fred marveled in her beauty, bathed in the amber glow of the dryer light.



Whenever Fred could afford to, he would take Ethel out to dinner or the movies. Being the perfect gentleman, Fred would always open Ethel's car door and help her from the car. Ethel was perfectly happy opening her own car door, but Fred would not stand for it.



Fred would take Ethel to fancy dinners at fine restaurants. He always made sure they could share an exquisite meal and got a table that was close to the window, so they could gaze out over the gardens filled with lovely statuary and beautiful flowers.

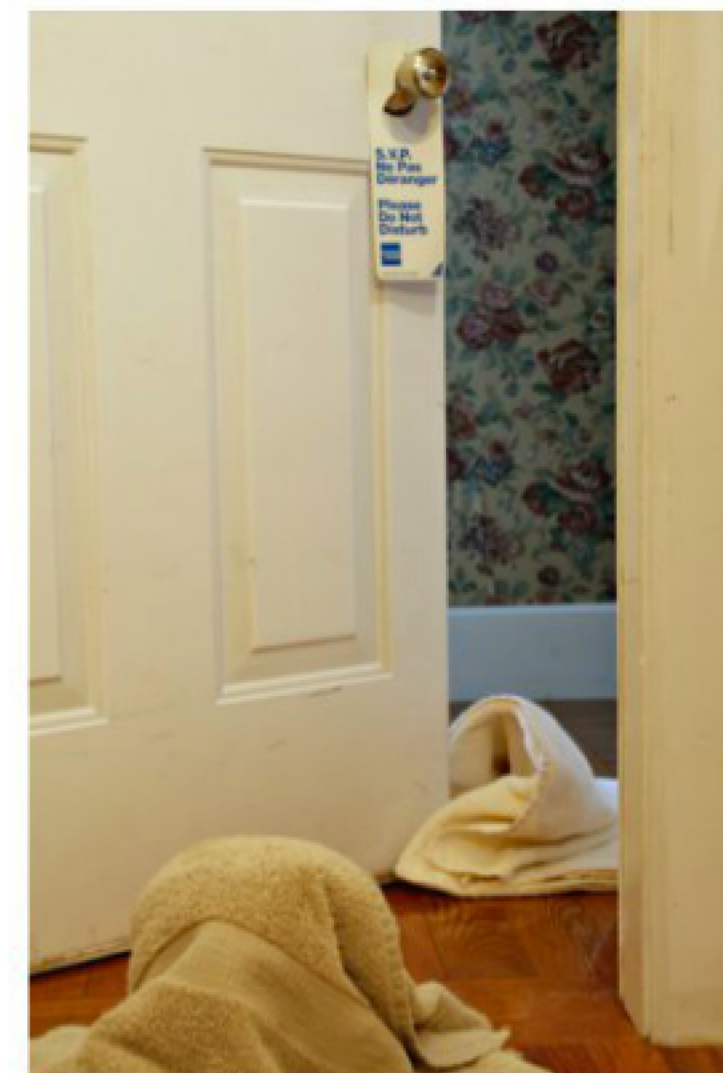
Fred had made up his mind that Ethel was the towel for him, but Ethel was not convinced.



Ethel would meet Fred on her lunch break at the outdoor cafe for coffee or soda. One day Fred picked a flower and gave it to Ethel. Ethel was finally succumbing to Fred's special charms. She waited in anticipation for the time she would spend with Fred.



From time to time, Ethel would rent a room at the Inn and would meet Fred for a secret tryst. They both knew that towels were not permitted to share a room, except on the towel rack in the bathroom, but neither of them could resist the temptation.



They would spend lazy summer afternoons on the swing, just sitting and talking. They would watch the cars go by and the flies buzz around them, hungrily feeding on the warm blooded animals that came near the island.



One time they got caught out in the rain, but Fred was always prepared and had an umbrella for the two of them to share. They huddled close together under the umbrella to keep the rain off of themselves, because let's face it, as towels they were just going to soak up the water, and get mildew if they weren't protected.

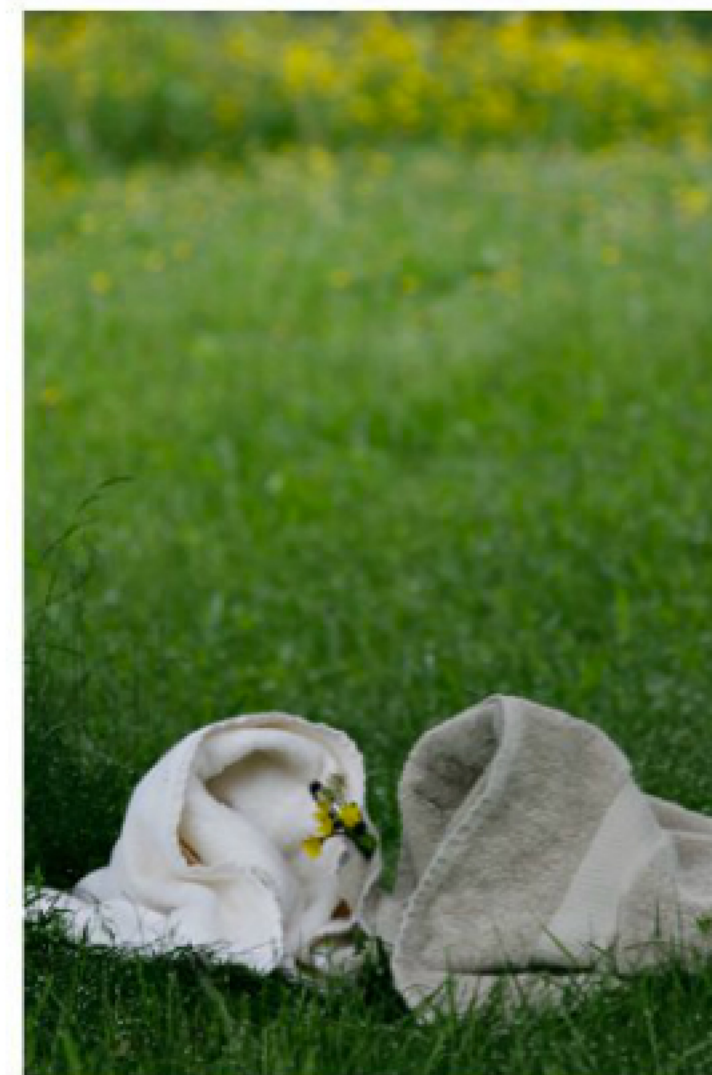


The bridge that goes over to the island was one of their favorite spots. They would stand on the bridge and watch the sun rise in the wee hours of the morning. Snuggling for warmth against the dew and cool air of the dawn.



Over the summer they would sit under a shade tree and share their most intimate secrets.

Fred would make a bouquet from the wild flowers growing all around, because he knew how much Ethel loved flowers.



In their middle age, they would sip wine and eat fruit, lying in a luxurious bubble bath in the Jacuzzi tub. By the time they would emerge from the tub, they would be heavy with water, wine and grapes, and dripping with their love for each other.



Sometimes when they were relaxing in the grass amongst the wildflowers, Ethel would feed Fred grapes, one at a time. Fred felt like the king of the world. Like nothing could ever sate his love for Ethel, and she doted on him.



On overcast days, they would walk to the market, and share a latte in the outdoor cafe. Ethel always had a flower in her hair. She said it made the gloomy day a little bit nicer, but really it just reminded her of that first flower Fred had given to her.



Every day they would take a long walk along the beach at low tide. It was good for Fred to get the exercise, and Ethel was always concerned that he wasn't taking care of himself. They would walk down to the inlet and back, and some days would stop near the inlet and just admire the ebb and flow of the ever moving sea.



Some days, when neither of them were working, they would lounge in the gazebo among the well tended flowers. Often Ethel would lean back against Fred and they would just enjoy the song birds, the smell of freshly mown grass, and the sights of the garden.



Living together meant giving up some things too. Sharing a bathroom can be difficult, but Fred and Ethel had such love for each other, that they made do with what they had. The small bathroom was cramped for an individual, but the two of them never complained about the sacrifice.

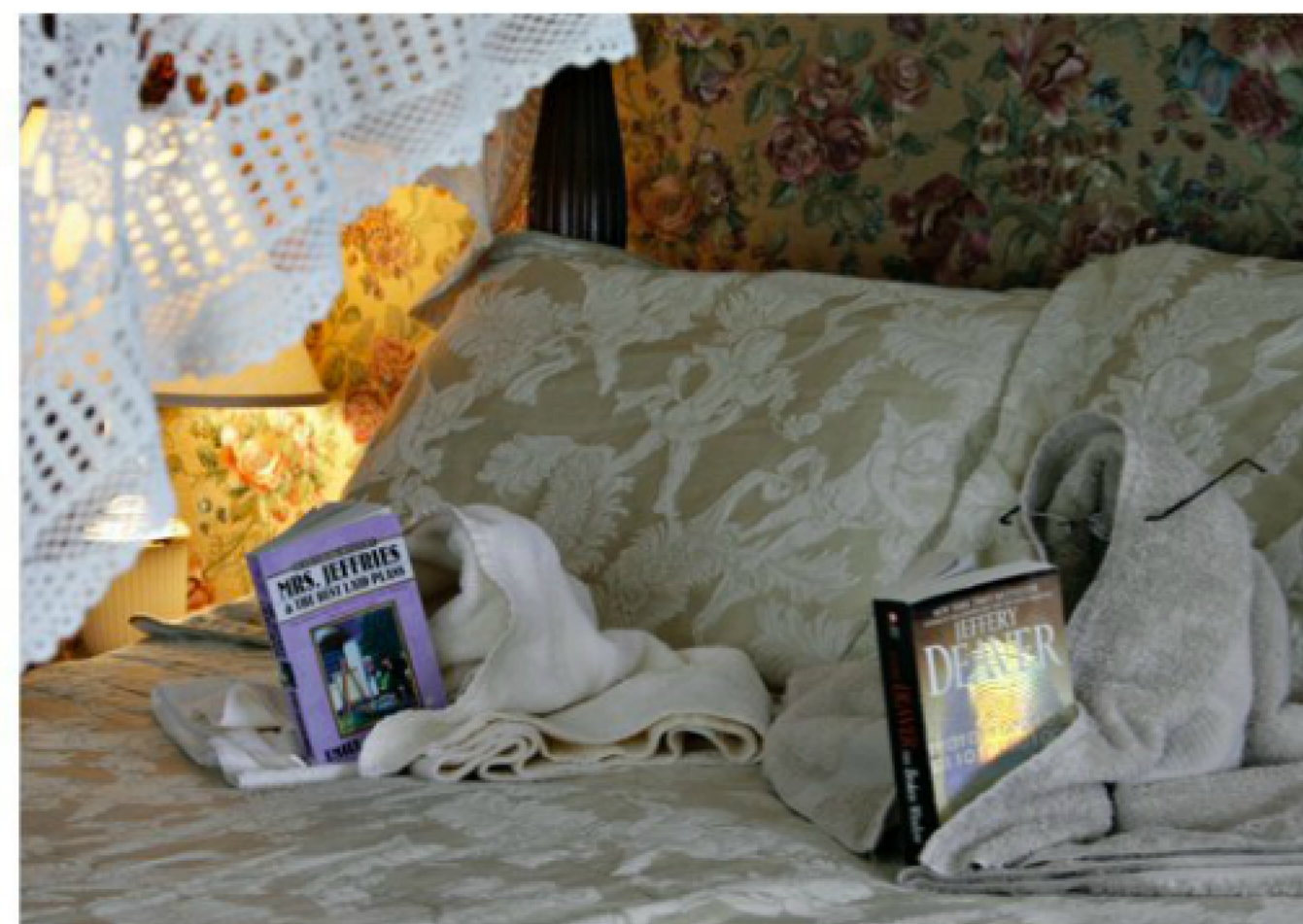


As they got older, Fred would come home from work thread bare. Ethel was always there for him with a smile and a back rub. Fred could feel the tension of his day slip away as Ethel worked the muscles in his shoulders and neck.



And on those dreary, rainy mornings, Fred and Ethel preferred to relax in their bed until noon. They would read books and simply enjoy being in each others' company.

And that, my friends, is how towels make [everlasting] love.





This is Matthew G. Schmidt's first attempt at writing a story. Matthew has been photographing seriously since 2003 when he purchased his first DSLR. Matthew is an active member of the Northern Virginia Photographic Society (<http://www.nvps.org>).