



Source: Amy Teibel, AFP, 'Sharon has brain scan as nation prays', *Sydney Morning Herald* online, 08/01/06.

Tags: [art](#), [dreams](#)

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Fuck she was excited! Sitting up in bed sipping a cup of steaming Earl Grey she fantasised about the crowd's reaction...

Her ex would be there of course; being a member of the 'A' team, he was at all the important town functions. She would maintain a calm exterior, then when the announcement was read out she would look surprised, humble even.

Those two years at TAFE had finally paid off; she could see their faces filled with stunned amazement.

'Congratulations'; 'Well deserved'; 'All of your hard work has paid off'; 'We knew you were talented': Oh yes, she could hardly wait.

The bedside radio showed the time as 3.37am; she knew more sleep would be needed if she was to look her best tonight but her mind was racing. She had a momentary feeling of panic regarding her chosen outfit for the evening: carefully selected from Sally's Boutique (Salvation Army), she hoped the garment hadn't previously belonged to a member of the crowd, after all this was a small place. Oh well, no use stressing about what might happen; she'd just focus on the positive.

A person 'in the know', one of the judges actually, had told her, quietly, yesterday, in the strictest of confidence, that she was the chosen one. Trying to drive home sensibly after hearing the news was no easy feat but she'd managed; home was only 5 minutes away after all. That was one of the pluses living in the country; everything was only a few minutes away, nothing like the hustle and bustle of the big cities, thank god, her nerves wouldn't

stand for that.

People she'd bump into in the supermarket or in town, would be surprised to learn that she was still 'around'. After a divorce, the woman in question would usually move to the big city. Not her though, she was pursuing her talent, at last! Living in a small town wasn't quite the same as living in, say, New York, but the recognition and accolades that tonight's award would bring, were a small beginning, surely.

The bowel surgeon, Mr. Pile and his wife Claire, had put up the prize money this year; nothing to be sneezed at either—\$1000 was a LOT of money. She was so pleased that the prize wasn't going to June. June Bright, the dentist's wife, seemed to win just about every damn painting contest under the sun. 'It was high time someone else was given a go and tonight; it just so happens the gods are smiling down on me and deservedly so—it's bloody hard work being an artist; the suffering!'

'And the winner is.....June Bright! Congratulations June; well done.'

Later that night, as she sat on the side of the bath watching the water pour from the faucet, she thought that perhaps she had been a bit too provocative, painting the stamens flesh pink. She remembered her feeling of near euphoria early this morning but now she was more determined not to give up. She was no coward, but next year she'd stick with yellow...

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Linda Botham.