

Harry always wore two different shoes to work. One brown, the other black. Some presumed he might be colorblind, or in a rush when he dressed each day. They were wrong. Sure, the first time it happened, it was a mistake, but no one told him, and now he wondered how long he could continue the charade before someone pointed it out. He'd reached day two-hundred-fifty-six, and not a peep. Now an unconscious ritual, Harry's fiancé worried he'd show up at their wedding in mismatched shoes. After countless jokes, she bought him a pair of red converse for the event.



Inspired by a writing prompt entitled *Harry Always wore Two Different Shoes*, this story took a few different turns. I wondered why Harry would wear two different shoes. Did he go to private school, and this was his only way of rebelling? Accidental? I waffled around for a while before deciding why not both?

Once, many years ago, back on the island, my mother-in-law fell and broke her hip. It was chaos, with phones ringing to alert us, ambulances being called for, and family notified. When we got to the hospital, despite the injury, mother-in-law was in high spirits, and because laughter is good medicine, we told her if she wanted a trip up the coast, there were less painful ways to obtain them. Without missing a beat, she told us she'd asked the medics if they could make a stop at the local craft store on their way to the hospital. They'd promptly told her no because she couldn't walk, and she'd pointed out they could easily push her around on the gurney.

Failing to garner sympathy from them, she glanced down and realized she had on a black shoe and a blue shoe. Apparently, after falling in her slippers, the medics had gone to her small apartment and grabbed her handbag and shoes. When she realized she had two mismatched shoes on, she'd asked if they could turn around to rectify the problem, and I laughed so hard, a nurse came in wondering what the injury was considering the large

amount of laughing we were doing.

The Reluctant Author.

A simple line drawing of a pen nib, positioned horizontally and centered under the word "Author" in the title.