I Am with You in Your Pain: Privilege, Humanity, and Cultural Humility in Social Work

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Abstract: In this narrative, I, a social work professor, share the empowerment process I teach undergraduate social work students as well as how I practice that process myself. I reconnect with a community in El Salvador where I had worked for five years. I discover that cultural humility dilemmas occur when professional and personal boundaries, community life, and academic expectations have conflicting demands. Ethical relationships remain most important as lessons for teaching and practice are shared.

***Keywords*:** cultural humility, ethics, El Salvador, cross cultural relationships, international social work

Introduction

In the photograph on my bulletin board, I am the tall white person in the middle of the back row among a group of shorter brown women. The image makes the human side of my mouth curl into a smile and the social justice side stretch into a cringe. The depth of those relationships and the mutual trust, care, and respect we have for each other is authentic. However, the history and current practice of colonization and dominance of North Americans from the United States over Central Americans is powerfully real. My presence represents both the possibility of cross-culture collaboration *and* the existence of structural oppression. The people of El Salvador have survived generational trauma starting back from colonization to massacres of indigenous people in the 1930s, the Civil War in the '80s, and organized gang violence today (Martínez, 2017). The juxtaposition of personal and political realities permeates this paper.

As a social worker, it is an obligation of the professional to share stories of reality so that others can learn, empathize, or improve their professional practice. Yet, as I am a white, middle-class, academically educated woman, one can understandably question my right to be in someone else's community and then share with others my understanding of their experiences. I have unjust power as a creator of discourse. I am partly an insider (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) to that world through five years of lived experience there. I invested my life and work in El Salvador; I birthed a child and raised a family in that community and built and maintained many relationships with people there. Yet, it is not my land by history or justice. I must interrogate my role in sharing the insights gained from such privileged access. In light of our nation's misinformation about migration from Central America to the North, I feel compelled to disseminate direct knowledge about my experiences. I recognize that stories are shared in confidence that must not be betrayed. My identity as a trusted companion overlaps with my memberships in the oppressor group and academia. While my intention is to increase empathy and knowledge of the reader (educators, policymakers, advocates) for the benefit of Salvadorans, the writing of this reflection also advances my academic career. Jenab (2016) asked, "Is there ever truly an ethical way of presenting someone's suffering? The ethics of speaking for others, of sharing and benefitting from someone's own words, is not a definitive set of rules" (para. 15).

Who will gain from sharing these stories of resilience and growth? What benefit can this have on the lives of the people of that community? I invite these questions to any social worker wishing to research, teach students, or practice at a community level in a community to which they aren't native. These potentially paralyzing dilemmas are twists in my own journey toward cultural humility or informed unknowing where power, culture, and history necessarily impact relationships. Cultural humility entails self-reflection on one's own absorbed stereotypes, a curiosity to understand other cultural frames of reference, and an openness to realize one cannot fully understand another's cultural experience (Ortega & Faller, 2011). A social worker's identity (race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, etc.) impacts their worldview, and their professional identity is one intersecting factor.

While working with community representatives in El Salvador and my university administrators in preparing for engaging in an international setting, I discovered that some academic and professional expectations conflicted with ideals of cultural humility in social work practice. I call these conflicts "cultural humility dilemmas." Cultural humility dilemmas appear in everyday decision-making moments when the responsibilities of a social worker's identity come into conflict with a client's cultural reality. The concept is informed by "everyday ethics." Identified in community-based participatory research, "everyday ethics" is the practice of negotiating ethical challenges that arise through engagement as an impartial deliberator and an embedded participant. This practice considers how relationships, responsibilities, values, and commitments frame how one sees, judges, and acts in particular situations (Banks et al., 2013).

Context

In the mid-1990s, I was a young professional, wife, and mother of three, living and working with my husband in a community on the outskirts of the capital city in El Salvador. Makeshift houses were spread along the shoulder of the railroad tracks owned by the government, their occupants having been displaced by war and again by a hurricane. I lived there as a neighbor and development worker, invited by a community church and stipended by an international Christian church organization. My role was to support community health workers, collaborate with women artisans on small business initiatives, and assist with other community projects.

Prior to the 10-week educational leave, the relationship between my family and members of this community spanned 22 years: five years of daily working on-site and 17 years of biennial visits, including two educational trips with students. In the United States, my family has hosted many people from the community, and we have visited people who have migrated from El Salvador to live in the US. Electronic communication between visits keeps us connected. This story, thus, spans time, generations, and country borders.

Two years after returning to the United States, I became a social work educator. Social work education has evolved over the years from a problem-solving model to an empowerment approach (Miley et al., 2017). This shift spurred the use of new textbooks, vocabulary, and practice lenses in teaching generalist social work practice skills. I proposed an educational leave to my university, with the purpose of renewing practice skills in my specialization with displaced populations and to refresh my competence in working from the empowerment

approach. The goal of the educational leave was to adapt and deliver two small business improvement workshops that are infused with women's empowerment principles. Secondly, I hoped to document with the participants the impact of the training. These goals seemed relevant in that they built upon work and relationships already intact using a curriculum that had been developed and piloted in Spanish (Smith & Shankar, 2015).

A Framework for Reflecting on Cultural Humility

The empowerment approach dovetails gracefully with the conceptual framework for cultural humility in social work that was proposed by Fisher-Borne et al. (2015). Context, strengths-orientation, collaboration, politics, work at multiple system levels, and reflective practice are stated characteristics of the empowerment approach (Miley et al., 2017). The cultural humility model includes three core elements: institutional and individual accountability, lifelong learning and critical reflection, and mitigating power imbalances. Fisher-Borne et al. (2015) contend that there must be active and responsible self-reflection on the parts of both the individual and the institution in order to affect long-term accountability and change. The approach highlights ongoing learning and reflection, leading not only to the acknowledgment of power imbalances, but to the creation of individual and organizational-level change strategies that address issues of power and privilege. Self-reflection on one's own cultural humility seems like a conundrum, since one must put one's self in the center of the narrative. But reflection of one's own values, beliefs, and biases is the signature habit of cultural humility practice.

Institutional Factors

The cultural humility framework prompts reflection on the part of individuals and institutions. This section is my reflection related to institutional processes and limitations that could serve to prompt institutional reflection, accountability, and change. I follow it with an analysis of my own positionality as an insider-outsider in the practice context.

One of the first cultural humility dilemmas I faced in proposing an educational leave in a community setting was enacting a role of an academic instigating a potential project. The challenge was communicating authentically with community leaders about project possibilities while still developing and seeking the approval of the university for an educational leave. Acquiring educational leave is competitive at our university and depends on a strong project proposal. A project proposal depends on clear communication, collaboration, and input of the community members with whom one is proposing to work. In my case, discussions with community members about project ideas had to be tempered with the caveat that our plans could only come about if my university granted me leave—the message being that the university had final authority over the plan, not the community. Most members of this community know me as a volunteer organizer, not as a "professor," so these conditions created a new awkwardness in our relationship. Community contacts and I wrestled with the artificial constraints of a linear proposal outline (goals, plans, and expected outcomes) and the knowledge that the project would need to respond to the individuals and community realities in real time. Planning for a potential project started over many years of brief discussions during my visits there, then moved to emails and phone calls to develop ideas that were tentative at best. It would not be fair to raise

expectations or request an investment of time from my Salvadoran counterparts with no promise of follow-through. But university permission is based on a concrete plan of action, not on an iterative process of "let's see what develops as we assess the resources and needs on the ground," or on a "relational dynamics" approach. Fortunately, the two main community contact people who were most capable of planning over electronic media were also familiar with the uncertainty of proposals and grant-writing and helped me form an acceptable request. I planned to train a small group of women as trainers, then together we would conduct the full workshop with a larger group of small business owners and, finally, measure the outcome.

Measuring success is tricky. According to the literature, women experiencing empowerment sometimes make changes like improving their businesses or leaving abusive relationships (Shankar et al., 2015). From my own knowledge of the community, I added my own possibilities. I hoped people would increase their income or help their children finish a higher level of education. I was also aware that any change carries risk and that people would only make small incremental progress to test the waters. Making more money on a small business enhances the risk of calling more attention to the business for gang members to threaten and extort. The journey from home to school crosses gang territory lines, putting their children in danger. But I have also seen how a little more confidence or a few more dollars lead to unintentional successes. I wanted the process of the workshop to develop organically with the women and to encourage them to have input on deciding processes and outcomes.

Once the educational leave was granted, an additional dilemma arose: striving for cultural humility from a practice perspective; that is, critically understanding my place in the system. It was not clear in planning where I was on the spectrum from a community member insider to an outsider. Weighing on the "outsider" end were personal factors of being from the colonizer/oppressor race and country, being non-native to that country and language, and being of higher socio-economic status and a higher level of academic education. Some factors that bring me toward the insider end include the following: being invited to stay in the area by community members and a local organization, maintaining language acquisition, having a history of daily presence in the community over a five-year period and subsequent visits, holding a standard of living in that country on par with local teachers and nurses, and raising children together with community members.

To give a picture of this, in my years living in the community and during visits, I experienced daily interactions with people of all ages and mostly of very low income. A one-mile walk from my house to the end of the geographic range of railroad track that was our catchment area would entail a dozen or more greetings of folks as they hauled water from the community water spigot, headed to the market, or walked kids home from school. The same walk would invite about five deeper engagements—checking on a newborn and mother, hearing the details of last night's gang activity, checking in on a project question, or extended joking with an elder about the price of beans. All interactions were face-to-face and most community business was conducted whenever I could encounter the person I needed to consult with, even if that meant being late for the meeting at the community center/church located at the end of the mile walk. Given this pattern, one can begin to understand the inadequacy of international calls, texts, and emails.

Invitations to return to spend more time in the community were common. Even though I had talked in person, emailed, and conference called with my friends and colleagues in the community about the possibility, and then certainty, of my pending extended visit, it would still take my physical presence over a period of time to reestablish trust and actuate a project. This was even truer in the reality of the current environment of increased gang violence in El Salvador, which has the highest non-warzone murder rate in the world (Martínez, 2017). The community I was about to enter was one of the epicenters of this violence and I could not assume that my community partners or I possessed the same freedom of motion or ease of conversation we had once enjoyed. During previous visits, I had just begun to understand how violence in a small community tears apart the very fabric of the relationships that make life bearable.

There was enough money granted by the university to get me to the country, but not any funds to host trainings. Lack of funding is the norm in this community and lack of money for a project releases us from negotiating the influences of money in a financially impoverished community. I would engage in low cost, low stakes, and locally familiar terms. In short, I reconnected with two local women—a social worker and an artisan business owner. We adapted the training materials to make them locally relevant and hosted an eight-week series of meetings. We secured very cheap space in the "casa communal" or community arts center, to coach micro-business owners—such as walking vendors, hammock makers, and market produce sellers—in improving their income. The small-scale community development techniques built on strengths of already established businesspeople.

Power and Privilege

The process of working with the two training partners and other leaders involved a play-by-play consciousness of power and privilege as I struggled to assist but not to dominate or control the process. An example of ongoing cultural humility dilemmas in this triad was deciding how closely to adhere to a curriculum that had documented success in a Latin country or how much flexibility to have with the local adaptation. The three leaders had a copy, and we reviewed it together. We agreed to read each module as it was coming up on the training schedule for the larger group and to meet for planning several days before the session. My high-fidelity mindset had me reading each module in both English and Spanish and imagining how we would pull this off just right. That was what I had told the university I was doing here. The social worker, who had lots of experience in empowerment training and another part-time role, skimmed the module for the gist of the message. The small business owner kept the manual safely on display and unopened until our meetings. Our planning always started with small talk—and a lot of it. We discussed everything from family and community news to pains and successes. I would interrupt eventually with my interpretation of the module using the book's vocabulary, the social worker would interpret the core concepts in a more local context, and the micro business owner, who for years trained local women in sewing and crafts, would pick up on one concept and explain how she employs it or not in her business. The first module or two I politely nudged, with little success, "sticking with the plan." But the social worker's educational icebreakers and the businesswoman's advice on small business was popular and helpful. My professional role seemed to say, "Conduct a best practice workshop," but the cultural reality showed that my role

was to create the space to help learning happen.

Power imbalance is a critical consideration prompted by the cultural humility framework (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015). The term assumes a balance that tips in one direction or another, in one side's favor and another side's disfavor, with the intent that the imbalance be somehow mitigated. However, a power analysis must consider a wide range of dynamics in order to name and honor the power that all system parts possess. I am rarely as aware of being a white woman from a university in the US with significant financial and educational status and the freedom of movement that those factors afford me, as when I am in El Salvador. My long-term relationship with community members gives me a certain kind of power, privilege, and access. As well, the power that my Salvadoran peers wield commands my dependence on them. These include local knowledge, community belonging, historical perspective, and power to accept or reject my presence in that space. This is not a figurative or heady interpretation of power. Their connections and knowledge of what I could do or where I could be, and their willingness to say yes or no to ideas and co-generate an appropriate training space, was immeasurably crucial to my safety and effectiveness. There was no quantifiable power to "balance," nor was there any guarantee that our given "powers" would serve us. Power of the local gangs and power of the police and Salvadoran government were immediate constraints. Gang powers impacted who could sit in a room together or what topics could be openly discussed.

The unjust power of the US government was a huge looming cultural dilemma for me. My government has been decimating this country for centuries. The US supported the non-democratic ruling oligarchy during the 1980s civil war, has put local farmers out of business by flooding the market with cheap corn surplus from the US, and more recently exported gangs to Central America, then blocked the exits for those trying to escape the violence and poverty. Salvadorans are in no way voiceless or powerless, but their cries for justice have so often been met with such brutality that silence is related to survival. My constant awareness of this history and the results instill doubt about my presence there in any professional capacity. Yet, the members of the community fully supported my presence and accompaniment.

Worker in Environment

Being trusted with stories of families that span decades and borders crystalizes an awareness of the painful cost of the US immigration system. For transparency about myself as the learner and to do justice to the realities people are living in this community, the following stories are based on true events and all identifying factors are changed and the details remixed from multiple events to protect confidentiality. Stories demonstrate challenges of how I, as an "insider-outsider," strove for a culturally aware approach to social work, and they also inform readers of the bitter choices being made by community members.

My role for 10 weeks, beyond the workshop project, was dictated by the circumstances and interactions with community members. The majority of time was spent listening to and being present with people in streets and homes, where outside visitors are rare. Home visits were to greet old friends and recruit/support workshop participants. Unannounced, multipurpose visits are culturally appropriate ways of engaging in this community. The tension is that I am

constantly using my professional skills, but I am not anyone's social worker. There is no stating confidentiality (though it is assumed) and no explaining of informed consent. The blurry boundaries between friend and professional make it difficult to define what professional practice is in this context.

On one home visit, Rosa recounted to me the anguish of receiving a neighbor's phone call that Rosa's son had been shot. She had rushed across town to where his bullet-ridden body lay on the other side of the yellow police barrier tape. Stopped by officers, she was not allowed to approach her son until the investigation was complete. She sat sobbing and watching her son's body splayed in the oppressive afternoon sun, longing to hold his body in her arms, to shield him from the sun and shoo away the flies. This was the son, she said, who had *not* gotten involved with the gangs, who had *not* been in prison, who had *finished* high school (few youths finish high school in this community). But none of this mattered to the gang members who killed him. Rosa already anguished daily over the loss of her first-born son who had died in prison 15 years ago and over her oldest daughter who had gone North eight years ago to escape violence and earn money to send home. Her hope in this middle son had given her own life meaning.

It was late morning on the day that Rosa shared her trauma. I was delayed in visiting and it was only a few days before I would be heading back to the US. I quickly recognized my heartbreaking mistake of a late arrival. Folks in this community have a more fluid sense of time than my North American time orientation. It is always hard for me to distinguish if an invitation is for a fixed time-and-date or a "stop by when you can." I missed that Rosa's breakfast invitation was meant to be a fixed time. We had seen each other many times during these weeks already. I often stopped for a shady swing on her hammock before or after other home visits, so this seemed like just another visit. It was not. Not only did I come late, but I had a visitor with me—a North American teacher learning what she could about the country in the span of a spring break. Rosa scolded me for my late arrival but invited us both into the house.

We were in the dark room—a sitting room/bedroom/kitchen/everything-in-one room. I can't remember how or why the conversation started. It seemed she needed to tell me the details of the story that were too painful, until now, to utter. She needed me to know. So I listened, prompted questions about how she got through this, acknowledged her grief and loss, and cried with her. My guest, who also spoke Spanish, sat on the other side of the room in the chair offered to her, mute but compassionately listening. Rosa told details about how her son was trying to protect someone else's dignity; how that "someone else" had been a close family friend but is now estranged. Rosa has not been well since the assassination and can barely leave the house now because of her nerves. She spoke of guilt haunting her because when another neighbor's son was killed a few weeks ago, she did not have the courage to go comfort the friend because of her own unbearable grief. She cannot tell anyone about what she knows about who killed her son because there is no one left to trust.

In my time there, many other people confided in me why and how they thought an assassination of a loved one had occurred. In a desperate search for meaning they blame other mothers for not raising their children well, or gang members' parents for leaving them as children for their grandparents to raise while they go North to find work. They blame the economy for no jobs for

their children, or gang members, including many who are neighbors and have been known from birth, who recruit or kill their children. They point fingers at political parties or government policies. In Salvadoran activist and ex-patriate circles, I had heard about my own government's contribution to the violence. A long history of US financial support for the civil war and decades of deportation of gang members back into El Salvador did not bring people to justice for war crimes or address the underlying causes of the war—misdistribution of wealth and extreme poverty.

In this particular community, many people are afraid of the police and military, who conduct random raids on homes and community gathering places. Heavily armed police, well known for being infiltrated by gang members, are said to shoot into groups of boys in areas of dense housing, where stray bullets kill bystanders. Police randomly search young men moving in and out of this community, the poorest section in this town. In order to prevent abuse by law enforcement, there is a strong cell phone alert network among adults who rush to their children's defense if they are stopped and frisked by police. It was said that police will randomly take youth from the neighborhood directly to jail and it is very hard and expensive to get them out.

I encountered the complex environment of fear and mistrust walking on the outer edge of the community one day. The police had stopped a young man. I continued to walk toward the scene and stopped to be a witness and accompany his mother, who I knew. She had been called by a relative whom saw the police stop her son. She stood there, cradling her son's sick child for whom he was making a late afternoon trip to the pharmacy for medicine to alleviate her fever. The police were brusquely searching his body for tattoos or weapons or anything incriminating. Perhaps because of the mother's brave pleading and possibly my white-foreigner presence, the officers decided not to arrest the young man when no evidence was found. The mother broke down in tears only after the police left. A life-changing crisis was averted.

These events offer insight as to why, during the visit with Rosa that morning, I was neither expecting nor surprised by the outpour of her story and emotion. I certainly would not have arrived late or taken a visitor along had I better understood her invitation. Rosa and I had recognized and mourned her son's death many times through shedding of tears and several long embraces but, until now, she had not articulated what happened. I was letting her lead, to share what and when she wanted to. I imagine Rosa trusted our relationship because for five years we had raised our children together, attended to her sister's sickness and death together, and collaborated on income generation projects and church events. Many years later after I moved back to the US and started teaching, she and others helped host student groups on service learning trips to the community. On this current trip back, she welcomed me and regularly re-oriented me to complicated extended family and community dynamics. We have history. On this morning of sharing, it was just the right time. I felt traumatized by the raw images of death and saddened by the knowledge of broken community relationships that were once strong. I also felt capable of listening, hearing, and holding a space for Rosa's despair and grief to flow. Rosa trusted me because I was an insider and an outsider.

Individual and Institutional Change

The expectations of a formal social work process or the university's linear proposal format are foreign to this context. It would be self-centered and disempowering to force fidelity onto a workshop curriculum. Home visiting to recruit and support business owners often became personal crisis intervention sessions. I could not have recorded or taken careful notes in the context of those pre-established relationships. The workshops I set out to organize did happen and there were gains and lessons learned. Nevertheless, even those sessions grew out of what my counterparts dictated once I arrived. I could not have pre-identified the co-trainers. Even if I could, we would not have been able to predict who would participate and what they would have needed in that workshop space. Academic expectations are culture-based and not in tune with these realities.

Community-level social work in El Salvador clarified for me the primacy of relationship that is developed and solidified with time. The connection between Rosa and myself challenges and reinforces professional ethical standards of boundaries and dual relationships. It is not always clear who is "helping" and who is "receiving." This type of work requires long-term interaction with the individuals who make up the community. It requires physical insertion into a space in order to experience problem-solving and celebration with its members. Culturally humble engagement is almost impossible without some aspect of fuzzy boundaries that allow for relationships that are meaningful. "Unidirectional focus" is a myth: I may have had all good intentions to contribute, but I certainly gained immeasurably from my experience, and my counterparts also gained not just from me but from their role in helping me. Professional ethics are culture-based and need to evolve to embrace relational societies' cultural realities while still protecting vulnerable populations.

There is a local concept of listening presence called "acompañar," or accompaniment. It means to "be with." That is it—just be present. Show up in person and listen. "Te acompaño en tu dolor" means "I am with you in your pain." Social workers witness the realities in which people live. Showing up and listening or bearing witness can be a powerful action. It is a way of showing support and honoring people's realities. As an insider, I felt it was my obligation. As an outsider, I sensed accompaniment was one of the few things I could do that would not carry the risk of significant and possibly deadly repercussions. The Central American concept of accompaniment could be included in the teaching of interventions in social work education because it is a way we help people—not through fixing, but through affirming them and their experience as human beings and allowing them to vent safely.

I was sharing in a small part of Rosa's pain. Over time we have carried each other's stories and pain as part of our lived history. I cared deeply about her son that was killed; he was the same age as my son. They played together as children. In recent years, Rosa kept a watchful eye on my own young adult child who returned for months at a time to live in the community. As a community social worker, I may have crossed the boundary between friend and social worker. Social workers owe it to the people with whom we work and to our profession to recognize the messiness of rigid boundaries and advocate for new "paradigms of presence" with our client systems. It is right to be present to one another: I to Rosa and her to me, as she was in my quest

to reintegrate into the community. We lack humility if we do not allow people to offer or reciprocate that support if and when they feel moved. This approach to social work practice pushes the ethical boundaries of dual relationships and the research principle of objectivity. These boundaries need to be examined and challenged.

Inserting oneself into community is messier than what our textbook frameworks or research protocols demand. Little of what I did fits neatly into the constructs of social work practice. The need to conform to the community's lax spontaneity simply contradicted rigid, quantitative study, and for all these uncertainties, the Institutional Review Board did not approve this development project as meeting the rigors of a research protocol. Terms like boundaries, cultural competence, cultural humility, informed consent, social work roles, and micro/macro continuum all compartmentalize the experience and do not capture the whole. To prepare students for practice, educators must help them negotiate the ambiguity of prescribed change processes and the complexities of their own intersectional identities, which are sources of both privilege and oppression.

Conclusion

Many "humility dilemmas" presented themselves for me while practicing in this environment again. It was a very familiar space but still starkly different than it was 20 years ago. I speculated as to whether I was still as privileged as I used to be to freely cross the imposed line between gang territories while others in the community could not. I questioned myself about who else I might be putting at risk: friends, my host family, visitors, or others I had not considered. If any of my trusted allies had suggested that my presence was putting anyone at risk, I would have left immediately. However, many leaders encouraged and supported my visit. They offered rules for engagement, like where I had to be by dusk, and what pictures not to take, and what pathways to avoid. I questioned my own altruism and wondered about my responsibility as a receptacle of these stories. As a social worker, I maintained community members' confidentiality. It was very tricky not to share people's trusted stories while still joining in with the collective storytelling that is part of the community grieving process. I was well aware that gossip could cost lives here. In addition, I did not hear a single story of grief and death that was not complicated by the indignities of poverty that exacerbate the pain. Vicarious trauma was real for me. I absorbed others' pain and tragedy in this context where I could do little about the system that perpetuates the violence.

From the perspective of an educator, this experience required me to do what I ask of my students—critically examine details and have no doubt there is something of value in every practice experience. I must guard people's identities but tell stories that reflect their reality to influence social workers, university boards, researchers and other decision-makers, immigration reform foes and advocates, and others impacting the lives of Salvadorans finding their way North to escape unbearable violence.

Social workers are partners in social change, be it through research, social work practice, or teaching. We have to try out bold stances and challenge our own status quo, even if that means critiquing our professional ethics to help gain clarity on boundaries (as that word takes on new

meaning in professional intercultural relationships). Cultural humility is a precursor to challenging inequities and promoting social justice. In relationship-building, cultural humility means holding an awareness of when to act and when to stand back while others pace, lead, and reciprocate. It means to notice and name strengths in others. I do not doubt that an insider/outsider presence can contribute to hope as we discover and name bits of light in dark places.

> If each day falls
> inside each night,
> there exists a well
> where clarity is imprisoned.
> We need to sit on the rim
> of the well of darkness
> and fish for fallen light
> with patience. (Neruda, n.d.)

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