

Rene Magritte, *A Sense of Reality*, 1963



****First Question First****

What is *your* immediate reaction to this artwork?

Trust it. Write about it. Use the guide sheet for help.

Continue reading for another perspective and journal questions.

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Living with death hanging over us. Most often this inevitability feels unobtrusive, like Magritte's puffy clouds innocently floating along above us. Then there are those moments when our bodies clinch every time the phone rings, when we wake up from a sound sleep with dread hovering overhead. When our loved one has been given a terminal diagnosis or has lived to such an age that death stands ready at the door, life can feel off-balancing. A sense of walking that tightrope, over-correcting, tilting to one side or the other all day every day.

Anticipatory grief sets in. And we may not even realize it. We still have our loved one in front of us, now. But they are diminishing with every passing day and week. We cannot stop this train. The boulder in the sky will fall. We are approaching heartbreak. And it is scary. Still, the kids need their breakfast, the dishes need washing, the garden greets us with spring colors and sweet scents. Suspension of disbelief hangs in the air.

Q.) Who are you now grieving as they approach their final days? What does this anticipatory grief feel like? How is it influencing your daily life?