



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

TASMANIAN SCHOOL OF NURSING

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# *Nuritinga*

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## **I am Pedro's Back**

Sharyn Hope, BN RN  
Tasmanian School of Nursing  
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### **Background**

Sharyn graduated with a BN from the TSON in December 1998. She wrote this poem as part of her coursework in Health Care Where People Live and Work (CNA 125). It has been recommended for publication because it shows a high level of genuine empathy with the patient/client, expressed in a creative way.

### **Poem**

I am Pedro's back

I had two crushed discs

I had these discs removed.

now

I have a fusion of my lumbar 4 and 5 and sacrum 1

I had a Brandican's cage and bone chips inserted

I now sport a 15 cm vertical scar

I have changed Pedro's life completely.

he used to

Be the sole breadwinner

Go fishing

Go bushwalking

Play cricket

Romp with the kids

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Sleep all night

Have a great sex life

Enjoy gardening

Mow the lawns

Maintain the cottage

Attend school functions

Eat well

Drive the car

Chop the wood

Walk the dog

Service the car

Cart the chook pellets

Visit friends

Shower himself

Cook for pleasure

Work at the Pulp Mill on shift

Prime the creek pump

Not take pills

Feel mentally stable

Expect a future

Dream of building his dream home.

now

I have taken control of Petro's life

I dictate when and how he can do things

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I restrict his environment, my favourite place is the bed

I introduced him to pain killers, muscle relaxants and anti-depressants

I forced him into the world of hospitals, doctors and nurses

I claim his leisure, to time now spent reading and watching TV

I disturb his sleep with my pain and fill his mind with 'maybes' until we are both exhausted

I give him that edge, to growl at the kids and nit pick his wife

I own his resentment of able bodies and fallen dreams

I demand him mourn for my being

I swallow up his self esteem and question his manhood

I allow others to intrude on his privacy for my sole benefit

I hold the key to his future pay packet now

I have become his sense of self, without any answers.