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Art Captures Patients' Struggles After Breast Surgery

I was very moved by the cover illustration "Two Spheres" of the July 2010 issue of the *Oncology Nursing Forum* and the accompanying explanation, which reminded me of my many years as a nurse in a cancer reconstructive surgery clinic.

Breast reconstruction postmastectomy has a profound effect on patients. The lost breast can never be replaced. The surgical team often describes a patient's breast reconstruction results as "awesome" or "spectacular." Yet we cannot and should not expect patients to agree.

Nurses, who are with patients during preoperative preparation and through

the postoperative period, can offer the understanding and support that patients need. Acceptance of the "new" body takes time (years, as the artist revealed).

As a manager, I have observed clinic nurses accepting patients' need to grieve, normalizing feelings of distress, and helping patients eventually achieve adjustment.

Thank you for considering bringing this lovely artwork and reflection to your readers' attention. Insight leads to understanding.

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Article on Prolonged Grief Disorder Moves Reader

The article "Prolonged Grief Disorder" by Lizel Craig (vol 37, pp. 401–406) was AMAZING and so moving. I was in tears reading it! I know this couldn't have been easy to write, but the author did an excellent job! Maybe this can turn into a series of articles. She should be given more opportunity to express herself and display her brilliance at the same time!

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