

THE FICTION FLYER
An Ezine for
Readers and Writers of Fiction
 TRI STUDIO BOOKS LLC
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WRITER'S TIP:

Contemporary authors are dealing with movie and television savvy readers. In the last 100 years, visual IQs have heightened from visual exposure. Unlike writers of past centuries, today's author must compete with the fast action and forward moving plots of movies. That's why we must "show" and not "tell," making every word count.

Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,



I'd love to claim Whoopie Goldberg as my new best friend, but for all of you who have already been to the Wax Museum in Las Vegas, you know this is just her stiff twin. And the one on the left looks like a real person, too, doesn't she? Hehehe

We are very proud of another information-packed issue of *The Fiction Flyer*. Please do not miss a very enlightening interview of author Charles Mossop. Not only is he a talented multi-published writer, but he is also legally blind. He also manages to volunteer his time freely for the Canadian Institute for the Blind. How does he do it? you might ask. I know I did. He shares his thoughts on writing and blindness in this interview. It's very inspiring, and I'm proud to count him as a friend and colleague.

In an effort to bring you current publishing news, Ray and I spend long hours researching the latest events. While it is more than satisfying, we find that it is taking away from our writing and other related activities. For this reason, we have decided to publish *The Fiction Flyer* on a bi-monthly basis. This way, we can continue to give it the attention we feel it deserves.

We are, as always, open to suggestions for future articles and welcome your input. We'd love to look at your articles for consideration to publish.

And something new - please look at our latest feature, which you'll find in each issue from this one forward: a writing contest. This issue's contest is called "A Picture is Worth 300-500 words." There are even modest cash prizes and award certificates. We publish all winners. Please do read the guidelines and submit!

kgogolewski@sbcglobal.net or Ray at raygogo@sbcglobal.net. That's it for now!

Happy Reading!

Kathe Gogolewski

PART ONE

BOOK TRAILERS: WHAT DOES A GOOD ONE LOOK LIKE?

By Kathe Gogolewski

If a cover can sell a book, imagine what a movie can do for it. Lately, as Book Trailers pop up all over YouTube, author websites and other platforms, it seems that many authors have already considered it. Even Harper Collins has jumped onboard with trailers for their featured authors. I've heard it said that it's just a matter of time before we see Book Trailers featured on all major online bookstores.

I decided it was time to find out more about these little video gems, also called Book Teasers, Book Video, BookLit, BookShorts, and LitVid (derived from literary video) to name a few. Perhaps, I might even be able to create one of my own.

According to Wikipedia, the Book Trailer is a genre of its own, though the first trailers in 2002 were dismissed as gimmicky. Now however, Book Trailers are enjoying increasing popularity among plugged in readers. The trailers frequent platforms that range from YouTube and other internet sources, to internet TV, DVD players, iPods and some telephone networks. The business of producing the videos for books has even generated its own series of regional, national and international awards. Notable among them is The 2006 Book Video Awards, showcasing the talent of top student filmmakers, who compete to turn in the hottest video for the best three book titles of the year.

If I am going to create one of my own video trailers, I need to know what a great one looks like. I started reviewing popular trailers, such as the one for well-known mystery and suspense writer, Lisa Gardner. Her latest book, *Hide*, was introduced only at the end of the video. Instead, the trailer focused on her during an interview. Sounds a little dull, until it becomes apparent that this is no ordinary interview. Gardner sits, smiling prettily in her chair, as she listens to the first

Continued on page 2

Page 2 BOOK TRAILERS continued from page 1

question. The interviewer comments on the “twisted and dark” elements in her stories, and says that perhaps her readers are wondering what actually goes on in an ordinary day in the life of someone who writes like that. She assures the interviewer that her life is nothing out of the usual, and mentions that she starts the day by picking up her daughter’s toys. The camera flashes to a stuffed animal as a hand places it upon a child’s bed, then the hand returns with a pillow to smother the toy.

Back to the author, talking sweetly about her health diet, which includes a lot of fruit. Flash to a raised sledgehammer as it pounds into a soft cantaloupe, pulverizing it. And so it goes. An excellent video that fit with the theme of her dark tales because it’s twisted in a funny kind of way. Here’s the link:

<http://www.publishersmarketplace.com/members/BkDoctorSin/> Scroll down to Lisa Gardner and click on the YouTube arrow to play it.

So funny video works well, obviously, but not all genres lend themselves to humor. Romance, for example, might sour with a comedy routine. I can’t envision a woman with her head resting on her lover’s chest as she struggles futilely to stifle her sneezes, as a result of her allergic reaction to him. Now, that might be funny on Saturday Night Live, but I don’t think it makes for the best romance. Some Romance, Chick Lit or Women’s Fiction *is* all about funny, however, so there are exceptions. *Bad Bridesmaid* by Siri Agrell (Harper Collins) is an example. The trailer begins with a serious tone and lovely wedding imagery, but soon degenerates into music that sounds like it belongs to *Girls Gone Wild* with scenes of bridesmaids who look like they think a wedding is just another excuse to party. <http://www.harpercollins.ca/trailers/>



I googled several famous romance authors next, such as Nora Roberts and Danielle Steele, looking for their trailers. I found none. Maybe they don’t *need* them. I assume their novels leave bookstores in droves on the morning of their release dates. I did find romance trailers on YouTube, however, and some of them are very good. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBF5reOEBeA&mode=related&search=>

The ones I liked best created a mood or strong feeling. I noticed these videos contained visual images that matched the music and the text, and presumably the mood of the book. In one example, a romantic suspense called *The Black Dragon* by December Quinn, dramatic music is married with foreboding images, drenched in red. Words like “vengeance,” “forced to marry,” and “passion” flash across the screen. I was interested. Unfortunately, the credits at the end barely made an impression before fading to tiny red font on black that I could not read. I watched it twice, looked hard, and

continued next column

Writers!!! Announce your books! Publish articles, poetry & flash fiction! Publish artwork and photography! Submit to Joyce Faulkner at katieseyes@aol.com with "Y&W Submission" in the subject line of your email.

Readers!!! Get a fun monthly newsletter that includes work from novice to famous writers who range from eight to ninety-four <so far>!! Formatted in color with cover art, photos and illustrations. FREE! Delivered in pdf format to your email box or available at http://www.redenginepress.com/y%26w_newsletter.htm. To subscribe, send email to nate@redenginepress.com with "Add Y&W" in subject line.

BOOK TRAILERS continued

finally saw the URL for Triskelion Press. Barely saw it. The only failing in an otherwise well-done video.

I did not enjoy every video trailer. Some went on forever, showing one slow pastoral scene after another; scenes that seemed to have little to do with the text and excerpts superimposed over them. “She loved him to death...then, she loved him in death” the words would tell you, while the scene depicts a lovely ocean beach or the green hills of Maui, all carried by a lilting classical tune. If she loves a ghost in this tale, really, I think I’d rather see a spirit or at least an impression of one. And perhaps music that stimulates a little mystery or danger.

Of course, some romance novels can embrace scenic in a big way. Settings help create the mood and ambience in many a romance novel, and can be used in similar fashion in the trailers. Historical romance is a case in point. Pastoral images and classical music can work nicely for many of these novels. One I really liked by K. Celeste Bryan (trailer created by Julie D’Arcy), *Sky Tinted Water*, takes the viewer through an intriguing series of images and delicate classical music.

Another great video on the same YouTube webpage: *Via Dolorosa*, is only a teaser (20 seconds, while most are around one to two minutes), yet it captivates. It starts with a silhouette of a man and a woman on a beach holding hands, the music lilting and sweet. It quickly turns sinister with a hard beat and foreboding text and images. We see an empty boat on the water as if someone had just been in it, and the text reads: But one thing they can’t escape...is his past. Then

continued on page 3



“WHY YES,
I’D BE
HAPPY TO
RESERVE
THAT RV
FOR YOU.”

WRITER WRY TOON: Book Trailers

Images flash across the screen in quick succession: soldiers, a naked back, a hand sliding down a window. Fast and furious, but it works for a romantic suspense. The tempo of danger is different from the pacing for a sentimental scene. I was left wanting more—the whole point, right?

Timing is a big part of the formula, of course, and while slower paced videos are often appropriate, no video should be longer than necessary. It's just like writing: economy is a strength. Get in, do it, get out. So if tender is the target mood, I think it's great to linger a little longer on the waves licking the beach, or on that kiss between protagonists, but just enough to convey the mood. It's a sure death if the trailer goes on and on and on. Oh no...not another kiss. Yawn. Two minutes is a long time for a trailer, and I'd be wary to try it unless I really know what I'm doing. Until then, I'm going to err on the side of short and intriguing, if I can.

Of course, part of the rationale for prolonged scenes may come from the copyright tangle. The images must be our own, or we need to have permission to use anyone else's, especially for trailers, since they're promotional. As a result, many authors employ their lovely vacation digital photos taken last year in the Bahamas, or that drawing they did of the coconut palm tree in Hawaii..



With limited material, sometimes the images we have get overused. Same goes for classical music, which is largely copyright free, since most of those great artists have been dead a long time and their copyrights ran out long ago. I noticed that many trailers for the romance novels use classical music. It's an easy choice to select a lovely, familiar piece like Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata when it's available and copyright-free. Or, as an

author friend tells me, you can use a relative or an acquaintance who makes his or her own music. My friend's son is producing the music for her videos. Maybe it's time to befriend those teenagers who pound their drums and wave their guitars in your neighbor's garage every Friday night.

Okay, this is all fine for authors of fiction, but what, you ask, should you do if your novel is non-fiction? How well, for example, can classical music buoy a book about the neurological pathways of the brain? Or a nitty gritty how-to book? Sounds pretty silly, doesn't it? Fortunately, there's a happy alternative. Instead of a Book Trailer, you can create an Author Trailer in the form of an interview. I saw a number of excellent examples. I typed "author interview" in the search box at You Tube. Most of the trailers consisted of the author talking about his or her book, a simple but effective technique. About half that I viewed

continued next column

FROM AMAZON SHORTS:

The Gold Coin

By Kathe Gogolewski

★★★★★ (3 customer reviews)



Kathe Gogolewski talks about The Gold Coin:

This is a true story. My father wanted you to hear it, and so I wrote it for you, and for him, of course. Did you ever see the movie, *Pay it Forward*? It promotes a truly inspiring message: when someone does you a favor, no need to pay it back—pay it forward and do a favor for someone else. This story, my father's story, has an element of that in it. Perhaps it is more than an element. I don't know. You can decide. In keeping with the spirit of the story, 100% of my royalties will be donated to Casa de Ampara, a children's charity in my town of Oceanside, California.

Price: \$0.49

Length: 2,412 words, 10 pages

About Amazon Shorts:

- Amazon Shorts are available exclusively at Amazon.com; you will not find them anywhere else.
- Amazon Shorts are delivered electronically; there are no printed editions.
- Amazon Shorts are yours forever – after purchase, you can read them anytime at Amazon.com. (They'll be stored forever in Your Media Library in PDF, HTML, and text e-mail formats.)
- You are free to print Amazon Shorts to read in hard copy form at your convenience.

You can purchase the short here:

<http://www.amazon.com/The-Gold-Coin/dp/B000IB0JHK>

BOOK TRAILERS continued

were usually well-known authors and talked about writing and their lives, where the non-fiction authors tended to talk only about their books. Here's one by Jessica DeNay who wrote *The Hot Mom's Handbook*. It's one minute, and when she's done, you know what the book is about and whether you need it or not:

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=aMyqzT30cuA>

View some of the other videos on this page for ideas about presentation. Some are long and I lost interest, but most are snappy and informative. The settings are different; some are outdoors with rolling green hills and tall pines, others are inside with a warm fire crackling behind the author.

So, I have lots of artistic choices when I'm ready to create my video. Hopefully, in my next article I'll have one of my own to show you. Until then...

INVESTMENT PERSPECTIVES FOR WRITERS



**A monthly column by
Raymond P. Gogolewski,
Ph.D (also writes fiction as
Ray Grant)**

CDs – Making Sweet Financial Music!

You won't find Justin, Beyoncé, Jamie, or Carrie singing Grammy winning songs on these CDs. The CDs I'm talking about are *Certificates of Deposit (CDs)*. You'll find a low risk opportunity to get a higher rate of return than on a typical passbook savings account. Banks, savings and loans, and brokerage firms are the usual CD issuers. A CD pays *interest* at a specified rate and matures at the end of a specified period called, *the term*. When the term is over, you receive your principal and the accrued interest. You can elect to receive the periodic interest payments during the term. In this case, when the term is over, you receive your principal along with the final interest payment.

However, before venturing into CDs, *it's vitally important* to have three to six months of living expenses in your passbook savings account or interest bearing checking account. This is money that's *available* to pay for *unexpected major* expenses or to support yourself (and your family) while you move to a new location or are between employers.

The advantages of CDs are: (1) A higher rate of interest, in general, than offered by passbook savings accounts, interest bearing checking accounts, or money market funds, and (2) the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insures CDs up to \$100,000 in deposit accounts. (\$250,000 in retirement accounts). If you are able to purchase more than \$100,000 worth of CDs, you can maintain the FDIC coverage by having an account in more than one bank – each account not exceeding \$100,000. By the way, money market funds are *not* insured or guaranteed by the FDIC or any other government agency.

The disadvantages of CDs are: (1) You must invest your money *for the term*, and (2) *If you are allowed* to withdraw funds during the term, you will, most likely, *pay a penalty*.

When you hold a CD, that money is unavailable to you. Some institutions offering CDs will *not* allow *withdrawal of principal* during the term. Most will allow it – for a financial penalty. Few will allow it without penalty.

For example, *Bankrate* (<http://www.bankrate.com>) cites the following example for typical withdrawal penalties:

CD Term	Penalty
30 days	All interest
2 to 12 months	3 months interest
13 to 36 months	6 months interest

continued next column

CDs continued

By taking an early withdrawal, it's possible to lose not only the advantage of the CD in the first place – a higher rate of return, but some or all of the actual interest, or even worse, some of the principal! Suppose you buy a three-year CD and decide after three months to cash out. According to the Table above, the penalty is six months interest.

Three months have gone by – so you gain three months interest and lose six months interest. Where does the extra three months interest come from? Answer – your principal! The 'moral of the story' is *not* to buy a CD with money you may need during the term -- that's what the *three to six months savings* are for that I mentioned above. And *always* make sure you understand the details of withdrawal of principal *before* purchasing your CDs. The only good news about early withdrawal penalties is that if you itemize your federal tax return, they're deductible.

The most popular CD terms are between three months and five years. Usually, the longer the term, the higher the interest rate. The risk in buying a long-term CD is that interest rates could rise dramatically over that term, and your CD would become a, relatively speaking, low rate of return investment. Conversely, the reward in buying a long-term CD is that rates could fall dramatically, and your CD becomes a high rate of return investment. There is a simple way to mitigate the interest rate risk of buying longer-term CDs – it's called *laddering* – and it works just as well when buying bonds (we'll talk about bonds in later issues of *the Flyer*).



Laddering is an interest rate risk lowering, investment strategy. Instead of buying one large, longer term CD, you divide your money up and purchase a number of smaller CDs spaced over time. For example, suppose you saved \$30,000 to purchase a three-year CD. You decide to ladder instead. You buy

a \$10,000 CD with a one-year term, a \$10,000 CD with a two-year term, and a \$10,000 CD with a three-year term. After a year goes by, the first CD matures, you take the principal and purchase a three-year CD...and on and on at each date of maturity. This way the ladder continues to "add rungs" for as long as you want it to continue.

By replacing the shortest term, maturing CD in your ladder with a new longest-term CD, you are constantly taking advantage of the best available interest rate at the time you rollover your CD. *Remember* each time a CD matures; you have the continued page 5

of money being rolled over and to modify the distance between the rungs in your ladder, i.e. the time duration of the longest CD. Think of your ladder as a 'financial accordion' that you play by adding or subtracting money – extending or shortening terms.

So... you may not win a *Grammy* by purchasing CDs, but you can make sweet financial music!



Dear Writing Friends,

Please help us grow the Long Story Short School of Writing and the ezine – forward this to ten writers you know!

Now available for sign up is Jamieson Wolf's [Sampler: The Muse – Writing from Inspiration](#) – there is no obligation, it's all for fun. [Check it out here](#) at the top of the page. Sign up and write up your best response to his assignment – you might have your work published in Long Story Short next month! And you'll improve your writing besides!

We are offering some classes in [eBook format](#) now – a downloadable .pdf file for \$18.99-29.99. The Muse is one of them. There will be no teacher, contact or feedback, but you'll own the course to study at your leisure and return to again and again! You will have the option at anytime of purchasing the interactive course for the difference in cost. More eBook Courses will follow in future mailers. Check them out:

- [The Muse: Learning to Write from Inspiration](#) - \$24.95
- [You, Me and Poetry](#) - \$39.95 for twelve lessons or the course in 2 parts for \$22.95 each
- [The Nitty Gritty of Good Grammar and Great Writing](#) - \$22.95
- [Modern Poetry: Broaching the Avant-Garde](#) - \$19.95
- [The Reel Deal](#) - \$22.95 for the entire course in Ebook format plus a free copy of Betty Jo's book, *CONFESSIONS OF A MOVIE ADDICT*.

[FILMMAKER PRAISES THE REEL DEAL COURSE:](#)


Whoever you are – a student, a teacher, or just a film addict who wants to move forward and explore the enigmatic world of cinema at a new, professional level, - Betty Jo Tucker's course on writing is the right place for you to be. Think about it: you're given six marvelous sessions that are meant to orient you step by step in the expanding cosmos of cinema by providing you with the most valuable technique, knowledge and advices one can only dream of. Metaphorically speaking, each session is your step forward toward a creation of your own world in which you, its spirit, soul, and creator, are going to thrive and develop in the direction your intellect and taste suggest.

Don't forget to sign up for one of Linda Barnett-Johnson's terrific writing forums, My LSS Writing Friend. Here, Linda offers a prompt and the members write a first draft, rewrite and final story, all with intensive critiques by the other members. At the end of the month, they all have publishable, completed stories. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining, have them contact [Linda](#) and tell her why.

Thanks, Long Story Short

[Add me to the mailing list.](#)

FLASHES IN THE PAN by Raymond Grant




Flashes in the Pan, Fifty Short Stories for the Impatient, is a collection of stories, each ranging from four to less than two thousand words. The stories are grouped in six categories and designed to stir your imagination, bring a smile to your face, touch your heart, or stimulate your thoughts.

A typical story takes about five to ten minutes to read. So, when you're between tasks, delayed, looking for something to do, or when you're starting to feel exasperated, take five...read a story...and let your spirit soar!

Price: \$4.99 USD ISBN: 1-55404-357-3
Genre: Fantasy/SF - Fiction/Adventure
Length: 94 Pages
Available from Double Dragon Publishing

<http://www.double-dragon-ebooks.com/single.asp?ISBN=1-55404-357-3>

WRITER WRY TOON: BRAINSTORMING



WRITING FLASH FICTION



By Ray Grant
A Wealth of Drabbles

November's *Prompt* brought forth a wealth of drabbles, exactly one hundred word stories, from our readers. Here are five more to tweak your imagination and elicit a smile.

No More Mister Nice Guy **By Donia Carey**



The editor disdainfully threw the galleys of my novel, "What Ho, Landlubber?" across the dirty floor of the scatter-rugged room (this publishing house--a cheap outfit--couldn't afford the Kilims to which I was accustomed) and, despite my protests, stomped upon them with a viciousness that could only be described as *unprofessional*.

Incensed at this low insult to my literary aspirations, I immersed him in a kettle of court bouillion--a tasty concoction of fish-heads, lemon, herbs, and brine--and subjected the bloody cur to a light simmer, laughing uproariously as I tested him for doneness with my long-pronged fork.

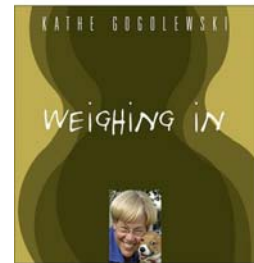
continued next column

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS

Subscribers with book news, book reviews, articles about publishing or writing, or other relevant information, are invited to submit for consideration to publish in *The Fiction Flyer*. No erotica, please. Email Kathe at kgogolewski@sbcglobal.net with your submission. There is no charge for this service.

From Amazon Shorts: *Weighing In* by Kathe Gogolewski Kathe writes about *Weighing In*:

This short is a light-hearted romp through weight discrimination reversed – thin people beware! Many of us suffer from the struggles of weight gain. For a subject that is normally somber, I wanted to create an opportunity to laugh it off! (Oh, if only it were that easy!) To purchase for 49 cents, click here:



http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000HDZAXW/ref=sr_11_1/102-5486577-8896114?ie=UTF8

DRABBLES continued

Cannon Fodder? **By Mark Chapman**

I frowned over the galley proofs, my fingers tender from the all-nighter. I'd pulled to get the editing done in time. *Why had I ever sought to be a writer?* Such aspirations were for the rugged, the stout of heart—not for the likes of me.



How had I gotten myself into this position, leaving my livelihood—my very future—up to the court of public opinion? Suppose the novel turns out to be dreadful, merely a target to be impaled by the cruel and uproarious barbs of literary critics?

Could I take it, or would it crush me?

Done!

Continued page 7

Meet Me at the Station... **The Readers Station**



www.readersstation.com

Not a Martyr

By Jill O'Connor



It might have been worse. He wasn't afflicted with stigmata that never heal.

George couldn't have guessed he would be anything other than a soldier, but thanks to that fateful day in the woods, he became a legend. His mark on the world -- a dead dragon.

At the time, George didn't appreciate his encounter with fire breath, at least, not until after the burns healed. Only then would he enjoy the fame, glory, and riches that went along with being a dragon slayer.

Unfortunately, the scars never went away. You have to suffer a little to become a saint.

The Secret

By Dina Graham

Flight 341 into Atlanta shuddered to a stop. Suzanne hoped one of the two handsome men in her row would retrieve her luggage from the overhead bin.

The younger man quickly unbuckled his safety belt, stood up, and hurried to the aid of a silvery-blond woman a few rows back.

Then, the second fellow pushed past her to join the first.

"Damn," she thought, "Life can be unfair."

Curious, she turned to look at the mysterious woman whose face glowed as she beamed at her helpers.

So that was the secret!

"Want men to worship you? Be an old lady."



DRABBLES continued

The Phone Call By Carol A. Cole

They were so tired: Eight-hour drives for two-hour meetings -- locating references -- reporting financial information. So many questions, too many fears. The house -- did it pass?



A vacation in the midst of the turmoil -- they swam in the warm blue water off the coast of Jamaica. Days at the pool writing down memories.

A last meeting -- more questions -- so serious, not friendly at all. Did they pass?

The fifth weekend; they could sleep in. Snuggled in bed, the phone rang too early. It was the social worker.

Now what?

What had they forgotten?

"You have a son."

Thank you Donia, Mark, Jill, Dina, and Carol. We look forward to enjoying your next stories!

=
=
=

M

WRITER WRY TOON
← on LEFT
THE EM DASH

From Amazon Shorts: *Pony Palace* by Kathe Gogolewski Kathe writes about *Pony Palace*:



As a retired elementary teacher, I have written a story to inspire children to work toward something they want, instead of begging for it. They will be able to relate to the protagonist, a ten-year-old girl named Mikaela, who wants a pony. The humor will capture the attention of both boys and girls as they laugh at Mikaela's overactive imagination, wondering what she will do next. In the end, their heroine makes all the right choices. Print the story out and give it to your favorite young reader.

To order for 49 cents, click below:

<http://www.amazon.com/Pony-Palace/dp/B000KLP7U>

READERS' MICROS AND APRIL'S PROMPT

By Ray Grant



In our January issue, I asked readers to write a 64 word BYTE, highlighting something special that occurred on St. Valentine's Day. Two of our readers submitted the following BYTES. I added one of my own – for this St. Valentine's 'hat trick.'

The Lasting Pain

By Sis Zabrina

On Valentine's Day I saw couples– smiling, gazing, touching, and embracing. I felt so alone. Tears trickled down my cheeks. *It could have been us, my love, it could have been us.*

The day you left, ironically, a friend said, *"To love is to place your happiness in the hands of another."*

She didn't say that happiness, uncared for, becomes pain that endures forever.

THE VALENTINE'S DAY OF LONELY HEARTS by Mark Chorna

It's dismal February.
My wife of fifty years is gone.
I'm alone.

The doorbell. A box lies on the doormat.
I opened it. Chocolates and a short note.

*My friend,
Does a seventy-year old woman send chocolates to a man?
You look so sad, and I am so alone. I wanted to make you smile
and think of me, as I of you.
Emma*

Continued next column

SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE ON WRITING TO TRI STUDIO for publication, and if it's chosen for the next issue, we'd be pleased to offer you any gift you like from this page:
<http://www.tri-studio.com/CONTESTS2.html>
submit to Kathe at kgogolewski@sbcglobal.net

Perspective By Raymond Grant

"How was 2nd grade today, Andrew?"

"Mom, it was neat! I passed out my Valentines...
My friends gave me a lot...
Miss Jefferies handed out candy hearts!"

"Sounds like a lovely day."

"Yeah, except..."

"Except?"

"Mom, Olivia kissed me."

"And..."

"On the cheek. She said she loved me."

"And..."

"It was yucky!"

"You'll have a different perspective when you get older."

"Mom, what's purspecked?"

Prompt for April on page 9

PROMPT FOR READER MICROS: April Issue

This month I'm asking for a 128 word BYTE. The story, excluding title and author, must be *exactly* 128 words. A hyphenated word counts as one word.

The painting below is your prompt. I could imagine something strange happening at dusk or you could imagine...

Have fun with this one. If you're pleased with what you've written, send me a copy in the body of your message to raygogo@sbcglobal.net. I might ask for your permission to publish it.



TATO BY KATHE GOGOLEWSKI

Fantasy Adventure for middle grade readers "Compelling" and "well-written" – Piers Anthony; science fiction and fantasy author of the Xanth series

TATO captures children's imaginations by recognizing their desire to earn the admiration of the adults closest to them. The story casts Michael Tate, an inventive and willful boy, and his bossy older sister, Nicole, into a strange world filled with mirrors and strange creatures where they must rescue their parents from the evil power that rules the realm.

Michael's trouble begins with the passing of his grandfather and best friend, Gankum. Rebuffed by his family when he insists that Gankum now lives in his closet, he confides in his grandfather's spirit that he wants someone new to love him. When he learns the secrets for creating a baby brother by soaking a potato in a magic formula, he jumps at the chance.

He botches the formula, however, and instead of a brother, two creatures are spawned: One, soulless and desperate, kidnaps Michael's parents. The other, Tato, part human, part potato yet irrepressibly warm and affectionate, accompanies Michael and Nicole in their quest to find and free their parents. Danger and treachery greet them every step of the way. Children will be enchanted by this tale of a young boy who acquires magical powers that get him both in and out of trouble.

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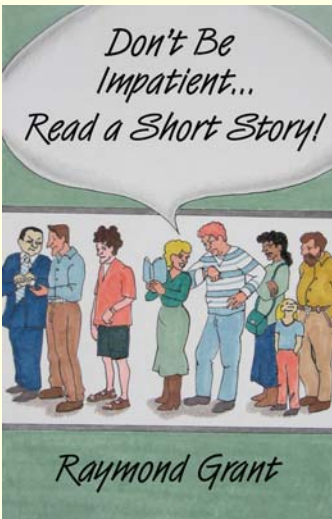
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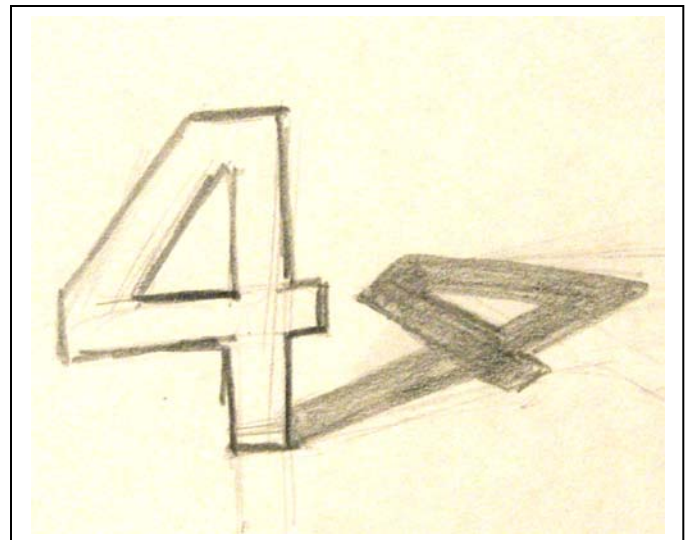
By Ray Grant

A collection of 50 short stories

"A delightful book – flash fiction at its best – humor, fantasy, and bittersweet stories to read and savor. This is a book you will return to again and again."

Gloria Watts,
Northamptonshire,
England

"Ray Grant is a powerful writer – whether he's making you laugh or cry, he does it in a flash. Perfect for those moments when you can't commit to something longer, but need a little something to make your day." Joyce Faulkner, author of *Shadow of Suribachi* and *For Shrieking Out Loud!*



WRITER WRY TOON ABOVE: FORESHADOW

CONTEST



A Picture is Worth 300 to 500 Words Contest

Sponsored by TRI Studio LLC www.tri-studio.com

Here's an opportunity to have some fun, publish your story, and win a prize! We have selected the photograph, *doorways* (pictured above), as our prompt. Your new *unpublished*, story *must* be at least 300 words, no more than 500 words, *and* be inspired by the prompt.

Now, to *the prizes*: The first place winner will receive a check for \$10 along with a First Place Contest Award Certificate. Second and third place winners will receive \$5 each and a Contest Certificate of Honorable Mention. Winning stories, along with authors' Bios, will be published in the next issue of *The Fiction Flyer*.

Guidelines

Only email submissions are acceptable. Please title your message: "Fiction Flyer – 300 to 500 Words Contest: *Your Story's Title by Your Name.*"

Please submit the following information using Size 12, *Times New Roman* or *Arial* Font:

Your Name
Your Address
Your email Address
Word Count
Author's Bio (Up to 50 words)
Link to your blog/website (optional)

Your Story

Stories shorter than 300 or longer than 500 words will not be read.

Stories that bear *no relation* to the prompt, as determined by us, will be rejected.

Do not attach your story to your message; attached stories will not be opened.

Please send your email with particulars and story to:

raygogo@sbcglobal.net.

Raymond Grant/Contest Editor

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES MOSSOP

Published author, retired college professor,
and legally blind writer

Conducted by Kathe Gogolewski



The bio of this remarkable man follows the article

1. Q -How long have you been writing, Charles, and what motivated you to get started?

A - Well, I was writing and publishing non-fiction throughout my academic career, pretty well because I had to. You know how it is. Mind you, that's not meant to suggest that I didn't enjoy it, because I always did. I published scholarly works, if that doesn't sound impossibly ostentatious: monographs, research papers, articles, all that sort of thing. My first professional publications appeared in 1972, and they related to my first visit to China the previous year.

However, I've loved fiction, and especially historical fiction, all my life. My parents loved books and the sounds and pictures of language, and as I grew up, they read to me regularly. "The Wind in the Willows", "The Just So Stories", "The Jungle Book" and so on became my great friends. I produced my first collection of short stories between the ages of ten and twelve: thirty-two pages written with a surprisingly blunt pencil, and a pretty close copy of Kenneth Graham. Talking animals and countryside adventures. It disintegrated years ago, but I can still remember large chunks of it.

As I grew older I chose to read stories of high adventure in times past whether they were fiction or not and became fascinated with the way writers could conjure up a world that no longer existed and bring it to life through their words.

Before I retired, there wasn't really time to write anything apart from what the job required, especially because I was doing a huge amount of traveling, but I promised myself I would try it as soon as the opportunity presented itself. So, as soon as I retired I began to write fiction and I haven't stopped. I've had some modest success

Continued on page 11

2. Q - You mentioned that you did a huge amount of traveling in your career. Where did you go, and for what purpose?

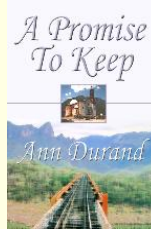
A - For the first eighteen years of my career at the university, I served as the institution's executive director responsible for all of the university's varied international activities. Not only did we enroll large numbers of international students on campus, we also implemented development projects in Nepal, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Russia and the Slovak Republic. In addition, we provided consulting and training services to numerous organizations, institutions and companies in places like Jamaica, Chile, Malaysia, India, Hong Kong and Macau. We also offered a number of our own academic programs overseas in partnership with colleges and universities. We sent staff all over the world for student recruitment, but I used to travel to arrange and oversee the other activities. Well, the Asian ones anyway. There was too much for one person to do, so I had staff who looked after a lot of it, but I did all the Asia stuff. I visited pretty well every country in East, Southeast and South Asia, bar North Korea. China's my favourite of course, but I particularly love Japan, Malaysia and Nepal.

I first traveled to China in 1971 as a member of a group of Canadian sinologists who were invited to visit China as part of the commemorations associated with Canada's diplomatic recognition of China that took place in 1970. I've been going back to China and Asia regularly ever since, and for the ten years or so leading up to retirement I was overseas for nearly six months out of every year if you add up all the separate trips. It was fascinating work and a priceless opportunity to see the world, but I wouldn't say it was glamorous. If I had a dollar for every airline meal I've ever eaten I'd be driving a Rolls Royce.

3. Q -You write historical fiction and utilize strong cultural and political elements in your characters and setting. In other words, you build entire worlds. The Magistrate Lin stories, for example, are set in the Ming Dynasty and vividly bring that period to life. The Captain Square stories take place in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century on the British frigate, the HMS Tudor, and take the reader for a wild ride on the high seas with the wise and experienced Captain Square. I know, because I've read stories from both series. How did you gain such a rich, historical background for your writing?

A - I have degrees in Anthropology and Asian History, and have always enjoyed reading books about life in times past -- especially those dealing with Asia. I did a minor in European History as well, and that, along with lots of reading, has given me the information I draw on for my stories. In addition, I read novels written in former times: all the way from Jane Austen to ancient epics like the Gilgamesh and The Tale of Genji.

As I said before, I've always been fascinated by writers who can bring past worlds and their inhabitants to life. It's Continued next column



**A PROMISE TO KEEP
BY ANN DURAND**

A Suspense with Romantic Elements

The tidy world of schoolteacher Karen Hudson turns upside down as she embarks on a reckless

chase from a small town in California to a jungle in Mexico, searching for the truth about Michael Browning, the man who has captured her heart. Stunned when he disappears without a word, she soon learns that he's been charged with murder. Her quest to locate him and unravel the mystery surrounding the charge makes her the next target for murder.

Michael Borbeau, alias Michael Browning, never intended to mislead Karen, or to fall in love for that matter. Only the need to protect his daughter forced him to choose a new town and a new name. Now, the whole mess is threatening to surface, and he must flee to keep his daughter safe.

Will he ever see his beloved Karen again? Will she discover the truth before the killer strikes again? Will she succeed in reuniting with the only man to ever unlock her heart?

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GOLDEN WINGS AWARD WINNER from Wings Press**

MOSSOP continued

great stuff, and I've discovered through my writing that there are many readers out there who love it as I do.

3. Q - You have written a novel, Jade Hunter, soon to be released from Double Dragon Publishing, I believe. Can you tell us about that story?

A - Yes, indeed. "Jade Hunter" will appear shortly, and it combines a historical tale with a modern one. I have often stood in a museum or gallery looking at something many centuries old and wondered about the journey it took through time to get to where it is now. In late 1999 I was in Beijing and saw a small jade sculpture created in the sixteenth century during the Ming Period. In "Jade Hunter" I tell the story of a large jade sculpture as it journeys across oceans and continents before finally returning to China. That story is interwoven with the story of a sinologist's attempts to track the sculpture down. The sculpture has many adventures throughout its life. It travels the Silk Road to the Middle East, crosses the Mediterranean to Europe and finally reaches England where it eventually ends up on a ship of the line during the Napoleonic Wars. It does get found and sent back to China, but you'll forgive me if I don't tell you how.

The concept is not original by any means. "The Red Violin" is a similar sort of story, and there have been many

Continued page 12

Page 12 CHARLES MOSSOP continued

others as well. However, most of those books tell a series of stories about the object in question and its various owners, but usually don't link them up. In other words, we never learn how it moved from owner to owner. I wanted to tell a complete story of the sculpture, so that's what I tried to do.

4. Q - Now, for the part that I find truly remarkable. You are legally blind; is that right, Charles? Can you tell us about your sight and when you started losing it?

A - Yes, I have very low vision, which is defined in Canada as "legal blindness." I began to notice something odd happening to my sight when I was eighteen, but the actual condition was not diagnosed until late the following year when I was in my Freshman year at college. It was one of those classic "here's the situation and we can't do anything about it" diagnoses. So bang went the driving license there and then. They didn't know how far it would deteriorate or how fast the deterioration would go, but they did estimate that I wouldn't be able to read normal print within about five or six years. As it turned out, they were right on. Fortunately, however, it went slowly enough for me to acquire my degrees and get a college teaching job, and by the time the situation got desperate, late seventies, there was technology to come to the rescue. Over time, I moved from small hand-held magnifying glasses to closed circuit video enlarging devices. I couldn't use them when lecturing, of course, so my lecture notes got larger and larger like Beethoven's ear trumpets. Eventually, I was writing them in big block letters with black felt pen and making them as brief as possible. It did wonders for my memory -- seriously.

For reading these days I live in the world of audio books, and there are devices now that enable you to use a book's index and table of contents, mark chapters and find individual pages and words if you need to. For the most part, however, I just listen to books straight through and they can be downloaded from the computer or purchased on disk. It's possible to get several books on one disk these days.

continued next column

WRITER'S TIP:

Promotional experts know that the single best way to sell your books is through personal appearances. If you need a presentation skill set, join a Toastmaster's Club near you.



Is there religion in your science fiction or science fiction in your religion? Either way you look at it, *Infinite Space, Infinite God* is a fast-paced, absorbing read that makes you think.

Explore the possibilities with *Infinite Space, Infinite God*, an anthology of fifteen stories about the future Catholic Church. Experience the Church's struggle to evangelize aliens and lost human colonies and to determine the soul-status for genetically modified humans, genetically-designed chimeras, and clones made from the Martian sand. Discover religious orders devoted to protecting interstellar travelers or inner-city priests. Experience technical advances that enable monks to live in solitude on the Moon and help one criminal learn the true meaning of Confession. Learn about the present and future advances that will affect Catholic doctrine.

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Learn more at <http://isigsf.tripod.com>. Order now from Twilight times Books, www.twilighttimesbooks.com.

5. Q - I know our readers must be wondering how a blind writer manages to write. Can you explain to us how you do it?

A - Well, as I said, I do have some vision, and that makes things a bit easier. I use a computer program called *ZoomText* which, as it sounds, enlarges whatever is on the screen and you navigate around the screen with the mouse. It makes the computer completely accessible, so I can use word processing when I write. In fact, without the computer I doubt I would be writing at all. I can't see what a typewriter is typing, and I can't read handwriting at all, so if the computer didn't exist, I'd be sunk. There used to be magnifying devices for typewriters, but they were very large and cumbersome, and I never could get the hang of them. I think most writers would agree that the many features and functions of word processing make writing easier, but for me, they make it possible. I mean, what if you decide to change the name of the central character halfway through a novel? In the good old days, the entire manuscript might have to be retyped, but today it's a matter of "Find and Replace."

6.Q.-What do you find most frustrating about writing as a blind person? What do you find most rewarding?

It's hard to say what's most frustrating. From a writing standpoint, I think it's that everything takes so long. I can't scan a Webpage to see if it's going to be useful in research; I have to read every word individually. It's that way with manuscripts as well. Through *ZoomText* I can enlarge the words, but the bigger the enlargement the fewer words appear on the screen and you use the mouse to move along each line and down to the next. It's positively glacial! However, with the deterioration going so slowly I grew used to those inconveniences over time, and now it's just the way it is. Everything takes longer, that's all. A problem now is that the deterioration seems to have started again - - maybe a function of age -- and that's adding new challenges. But I do know writers who are totally blind and use screen reading audio programs. I hope things don't get that bad, but I suppose I'll cross that bridge if I ever come to it. Outside of writing, I think the most frustrating thing is lack of personal mobility and independence. I still travel a lot by air, but at the

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local level, buses and taxis get old very quickly. Nevertheless, I'm still grateful for the sight I have left. I can still see fall colors, rainbows and flowers. I can still work in our garden, although only doing certain things: weeding's no good any more because I'd be pulling out the good stuff as well as the bad. I have to be careful, but I can still walk fairly easily as long as I look out for steps. It's not the big things like that which are the problem; it's detail stuff, like reading.

As for the rewarding things, there are actually quite a few. The disability itself is not rewarding -- hardly -- but it does provide some great opportunities for reaping other rewards. There are thousands of blind and sight-impaired people in this country and I have had great opportunities to meet marvelous individuals who are inspiring and uplifting. I also have opportunities to help other people who are dealing with sight loss and encourage them to understand that, devastating as it may be, it is not the end of life.



7. Q - You are a member of the CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind?), a voluntary, non-profit rehabilitation agency that provides services for people who are blind, visually impaired and deafblind. Can you tell us about the work you do for them?

A - As for the rewarding things, there are actually quite a few. The disability itself is not rewarding -- hardly -- but it does provide some great opportunities for reaping other rewards. There are thousands of blind and sight-impaired people in this country and I have had great opportunities to meet marvelous individuals who are inspiring and uplifting. I also have opportunities to help other people who are dealing with sight loss and encourage them to understand that, devastating as it may be, it is not the end of life.

8. Q - I understand that you'll be leaving for Kenya soon as a CNIB representative. Can you tell us about that?

Yes indeed. I'm really looking forward to this one, because it will be my first visit to Africa. I had staff who went there occasionally, but I never went myself until now.

A - *The CNIB*, in partnership with the African Union of the Blind and funded largely by the Canadian government, is implementing a project in six African countries coordinated out of Nairobi. The project's purpose is to develop and disseminate information on HIV/AIDS in formats that can be accessed by people with sight loss or low vision. That is, material in large print, in braille, and in recorded form, as required. And in a wide range of languages as well, of course. In addition, the project is training facilitators who go out into the smaller towns and villages and seek out the people in need of this information and training. The third element of the project is to train individuals in advocacy skills so they can work with their home governments to make sure that blind and sight-impaired people continue to have access to necessary medical information.

continued next column

As you can probably imagine, women who are blind or sight-impaired are at huge risk for sexual abuse, and there is almost no access for these women to information on HIV/AIDS, transmission or protection. However, worse than that - if possible - is the fact that there still persist in some areas ancient folk beliefs about blind people, particularly women, that they have power to cure diseases. These stories have, predictably, given rise to beliefs that blind and sight-impaired women can cure AIDS through sexual contact, and also that these women are themselves immune to the AIDS virus and thus are safe sexual partners. I don't think I need to elaborate further for you to understand what the situation is. Thus, the final element of our project is to develop strategies to combat these old beliefs and provide increased public awareness around blindness issues related to HIV and AIDS and other diseases.

The project is in its second year and is going extremely well. Our African partners are working incredibly hard and progress is being made - slowly - but it is being made. We're hoping that the Canadian government will be receptive to a proposal to extend the project for a few more years so we can include more countries. At least eight more if I had my way. Keep your fingers crossed for us.

Anyway, the immediate purpose of the trip to Kenya is to evaluate progress to date, and prepare for the submission of the proposal to extend the project. It's going to be a busy few days.

Continued on page 14

Coming soon: *Light at the Edge of Darkness* - an anthology of Christian Speculative Fiction

Venture to futures where religious "Terrorists" smuggle frozen embryos and resist technologies designed to break their souls. . . explore dying alien worlds scouring the galaxies for hope. . . get abducted and discover the universe's secrets or the trial of a lifetime.

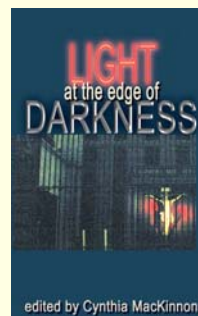
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**LIGHT AT THE
EDGE OF DARKNESS**

ISBN: 978-1-934284-00-1

Edited by Cynthia MacKinnon

The Writers' Cafe Press

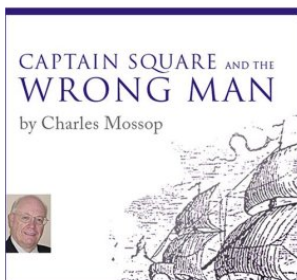
9. Q - Charles, have you ever written about sight loss? Either non-fiction or fiction? If so, what was that like for you?

A - Until recently, any writing I did in the realm of sight loss was non-fiction: advocacy reports, papers, press releases, editorials and all that sort of thing. However, last year I was invited to submit a story for inclusion in an anthology and I took that opportunity to write a short story about a young man facing the loss of his sight at about the same stage of life that my diagnosis came down on me like a lead weight. The story is called "The Other Side of the Bridge" and it's a fantasy really. The young man is enabled to travel back in time to talk to great individuals who met and mastered disabilities such as Beethoven and the blind poet Homer. The conversations he has with those people enable him to begin to understand that the most important thing is to make sure his disability does not define him. For example, he realizes that Beethoven is not remembered as a deaf man who composed music, but as a great composer - who happened to be deaf.

I have to say the story is very introspective and writing it was quite tough at times. I had to make sure that my own emotions were properly portrayed without making it sound like my thoughts were simply being handed off to a fictitious character. In other words, it had to tell the story of *his* experience and emotional journey, although modelled on my own over the last forty-some years. I'm not sure if any of that makes any sense, but in the end I think the story works fairly well. The anthology is called "Aleatory's Junction" edited by my friend Lea Schizas. It's published by Double Dragon Publishing.

Charles Mossop's BIO

Charles Mossop lives on the east coast of Vancouver Island with his wife, their cat, two parrots and a cockatoo. His hobbies, which he enjoys when he is not writing, are gardening, sailing and playing classical guitar. He retired in 2000 after a thirty-two-year career in post-secondary education and international development, which had provided him with numerous opportunities to travel to Asia and Europe. Charles writes non-fiction magazine articles on international business and historical fiction set in Ming Dynasty China and eighteenth century Europe. He is the author of the Magistrate Lin mystery stories and the Captain Square Mysteries. His stories have appeared in "Flashshot", "Amazon Shorts", "Over my Dead Body" and "Futures Mystery Anthology Magazine." He is editor and columnist for the historical fiction department of "The Muse Marquee" magazine and is a chapter contributor to the writer's resource book "The Muse on Writing" released by Double Dragon Publishing in 2005. He contributed to the anthology "Aleatory's Junction, published in 2006, and his novel "Jade Hunter" will appear this year, also from Double Dragon.



NEW RELEASE

AMAZON SHORT:
CAPTAIN SQUARE and the
WRONG MAN
By Charles Mossop



Fourteen-year-old Lupe Hernandez wishes she was blond, white, and popular. She dismisses the legend her Mexican grandmother tells about a treasured family heirloom—a pair of ruby earrings—as a silly fairytale, despite recurring nightmares of human sacrifice whenever she wears them. But when the earrings thrust her into the parallel world of Ixtumea, she

must confront the very thing she shuns the most—her cultural heritage.

Lupe's journey takes her through a dense Mayan jungle to the damp underground kingdom of Malvado, where a rebel leader plots to keep her from fulfilling her destiny. She is guided by a hot warrior protector named Teancum, who tells her about a prophecy of a long-awaited young propheticess—which happens to be Lupe. She trains with the Spider Goddess, who teaches her the sacred knots that bind both worlds together. And she meets her long-lost mother, Concha—who is now a dangerous enemy. Life as Lupe knows it will never be the same!

Earrings of Ixtumea by [Baccellia, Kim](#)

Category : [Fantasy](#)

ISBN : 0-9782157-0-2

Publisher : [Virtual Tales](#)

WRITERS TIP

Can *not* winning a contest can be a good thing?

If it's the right contest, it can. I entered my manuscript, *Flight of the Gryphon*, a paranormal romance due from Double Dragon Publishing in Spring of 2007, in the Four Seasons Awards 2005 contest sponsored by the Windy City Chapter of Romance Writers of America. It did not place, but I came close to being a finalist. I know this, because they gave me so much information. I scored 96 points out of 100 from one judge, and 92 points from another. The judges are senior editors from major publishing houses and literary agencies, such as Roberta Brown from Brown Literary Agency, Michele Bidelsbach from Warner Books, Barbara Rosenberg from The Rosenberg Group, Mavis Allen from Silhouette Books, Mary Chen from Avon Books, and Leah Hultenschmidt from Dorchester Publishing Co., to name a few. In the score sheets they send you after the contest, they tell you how many entries there were for your category, plus the finalist range and the median score, so you can gauge your place in the pack. Two judges write a comprehensive report, scoring and commenting on everything from hooks, setting, characterization, plot, conflict, dialogue, pacing, narration and more! They even send back your manuscript with comments inside the text. This was well worth the entry fee. - Kathe

TASTY SNACKS *

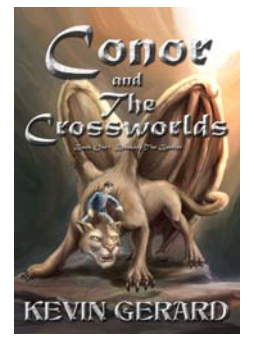
**By
Michael A. Kechula**

Frank wondered if the cannibalistic Three Moons Tribe really existed. He headed to Peru to investigate. Knocked unconscious in the jungle, he woke inside a pot. A fire blazed beneath. "I have herpes, syphilis, leprosy," he hollered. "I'll taste lousy. Besides, cannibalism causes madness and tribal extinction." They didn't understand English. Frank became 30 gallons of chunky soup, 150 patties, 28 pounds of jerky, and 500 sausages. This was sold at tribal-owned, franchised, jungle snack stands. Turns out the Three Moons Tribe aren't cannibals. But the surrounding tribes are. Three Mooners are industrious entrepreneurs, meeting the demands of hungry customers.

* This is the *first prize* winning drabble of the 5th *Between Kisses Contest* appearing in the anthology with the same name published by Sam's Dot Publishing.



A Boy, a Mystical Creature, and the Journey of a Lifetime
 Conor: an innocent ten year-old boy, not unlike other boys anywhere
 Purugama: immense, powerful, magical, a towering champion of the crossworlds



A young boy subconsciously calls forth the power of the crossworlds creators. They send the mystical beast, Purugama, to accompany him on a fantastic journey. After revealing a number of possible futures to his young companion, Purugama prepares to return him to his home. His plans are interrupted when Drazian, Purugama's mortal enemy, faces the immense cougar in a ferocious battle. The prize? Conor's life, or death, depending on the ultimate outcome.

Breaking the Barrier introduces Conor Jameson in the first of five epic fantasy adventures in the Conor and the Crossworlds series. As the journey continues, Conor's battles against the Circle of Evil's warriors become increasingly dangerous. Follow his amazing exploits as he becomes one of the champions of the crossworlds, finally fulfilling the oracle's prediction of reincarnation as first warrior and consort to the Lady of the Light.

Kevin Gerard Kilpatrick
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www.conorandthecrossworlds.com



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