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Letter from the Editor



Dear Readers,

Have you ever experienced a round of failures, each arriving on the heels of the last, until there's nothing left to do but laugh? That's been the experience for Ray and I in the last few weeks as both of our computers *and* external hard drives catastrophically failed. I now know what it feels like to

lose all your personal photos, writing files, personal stuff, manuscripts -- everything, everything -- in something like a fire. We thought it was all gone. Happily, the Data Doctors were able to save the data on Ray's computer, where I had hastily stored mine just before my hard drive crashed. Anyhow, that's why this issue is late. Yeah, I know...excuses, excuses.

We think this issue is worth the wait. It's the most packed one yet -- too many articles and stories to mention, so I'll refer you to the Table of Contents with the usual features including contests for writers. I would like to point out our interview with Piers Anthony, notable sci fi and fantasy author. He was very generous with his comments so please don't miss it. I have enjoyed the singular pleasure of dealing with Piers on a project exchange, and I can say this about the man: He is a person of his word. In spite of his self-proclaimed ogre tendencies, his integrity tends to shine through. You can sense it in his newsletter, where he touts the nitty gritty events of his life, both large and small, but I also know this about him on a personal level. He did everything he said he would do for me, down to the finer details. And who am I to Piers? Just another fan. Keeping his word is simply who he is, IMO. To do that, he has to care about doing the right thing, plus he must have a memory with the grip of a gorilla, or he's incredibly organized. Maybe both. The point: he is a man to trust in this respect. Not a small trait.

Finally, Ray and I are happy to announce the birth of two new books from our studio. Ray published *Don't Be Impatient...Read a Short Story!* with Red Engine Press under his pen name, Ray Grant. And my sci-fi/romance, *Flight of the Gryphon*, was published with Double Dragon Publishing under my pen name, Ann Durand. Details are included in this ezine. Suffice it to say that we've dragged out all the old baby bottles and diapers as the real work begins: promotion! You know what that's like! At least, our babies are letting us sleep at night. ☺

Coming soon -- a free download ebook of our Writer Wry Toons, sprinkled throughout each issue of *The Fiction Flyer*. We'll post the download at the TRI Studio website when it's ready. That's it for now!

Happy Reading to you all! Best, Kathe Gogolewski

Do I Know Which Author Promotions Truly Make a Difference? Not Always...And I Could Really Use a Survey
 By **Kathe Gogolewski**

Since I dove into writing full-time five years ago, I have tried many ways to promote my books, both online and off. I've also observed other authors using different venues in efforts to create sales. For many of us, it has been like throwing mud at the wall as we discover the process -- some efforts stick and reap rewards, while others don't. Actually, many don't. The good news is that it isn't necessary to find multiple methods to promote in order to become known in this business. One good method can work. Of course, two is even better. What those one or two methods may be are different for different authors, but it would be interesting to know what they have to share about it.

That's why I created a survey that we can perhaps all use. I've learned that some very expensive promotions, such as paid advertising, may only sell a book or two, whereas a personal presentation by the author in front of a live audience can sell many books and lead to more engagements. Often, the author is paid for the appearance as well. Sometimes however, the same activity or effort will work once, but not twice.



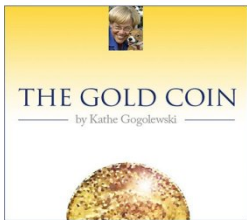
Continued page 2

News Flash - Just in! My latest Amazon Short has been published, and the cyber-ink is still wet. I discovered it a few moments ago as I was testing links in this issue for my old shorts. The new one: *You've Got Me, Kid*, is a fictional story about a boy in the foster care system. It was created from a combination of several true stories. I'll include more info on the Page 19. Hey, only 49 cents. ☺ Thanks! Kathe

FROM AMAZON SHORTS:

The Gold Coin

By Kathe Gogolewski



★★★★★ (3 customer reviews)

Kathe Gogolewski talks about The Gold Coin:

This is a true story. 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

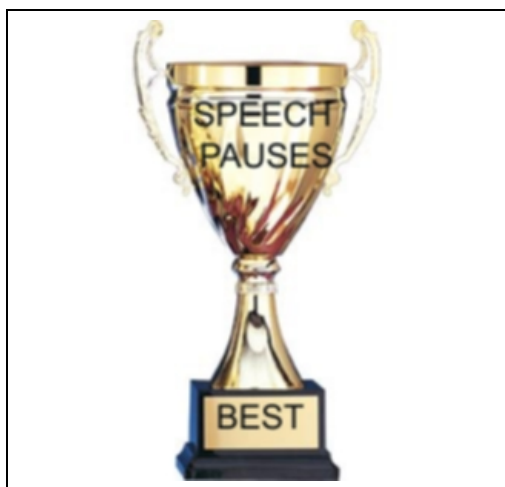
About Amazon Shorts:

- 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/B000IBOJHK>

WRITER WRY TOON BELOW: APOSTROPHE



AUTHOR PROMOTIONS continued from page 1

Other times, one failed activity can pave the way to another more successful one. With all this in mind, I've created a questionnaire that I hope you'll take the time to review and complete. The more people that participate, the more value the questionnaire will have for all of us. Names are optional. Please read it through and add your thoughts. The results will be published in a future issue of *The Fiction Flyer*.

I will include the questionnaire in this column, but it's only a reference. To access the document that allows you to type your responses, click here:

<http://www.tri-studio.com/ezinesurvey.html>

This link will allow you to download a Word Document that you can fill out and email back to me. This survey will be used solely as free information to assist writers in assessing and choosing promotional opportunities. Thanks for your help!

Questionnaire for Author Promotional Activities

Optional Name:

Optional Email:

Respond to the promotional activities below if you have used them, and then rate them on a scale of 1 to 5 according to how well each worked for you. If you did not use the activity, simply leave it blank.

The definitions for the rating scale follow. If the activity you tried led to another one that was successful, please add a note about that.

RATE SCALE:

0 = I have noooooo idea. I wish I knew. If I did, I'd either do more of it, or I'd quit.

1 = Miserable failure; I sold zilch, spent too much money, made no contacts. Kick me if I ever say I'll do this again.

2 = I sold a few books and/or made a contact, but it was so expensive and/or time consuming, that I won't do it again.

3 = Mildly successful; I sold books and/or made a few contacts, but after considering expenses and/or time invested, it was about a push.

4 = Successful; I sold books and/or made contacts. I made a profit. I would do this activity again.

5 = Wildly successful! I sold lots of books, made lots of contacts, the profit was great and I would do this again in a minute!

Questions:

1. Personal appearances (Bookstores, libraries)

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

2. Personal appearances (Schools, women's groups, rotary clubs, senior groups, historical groups – whatever you can create, etc.)

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

Continued on page 3

3. Personal Appearance (Book Fair, Convention, Conference)

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

4. Paid advertising (print source)

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

5. Paid advertising (online source)

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

6. Mailers – brochures

RATE #1-5:

COMMENTS:

7. Mailers – catalogs

RATE:

COMMENT:

8. Publishing a Newsletter

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

9. An ad in someone else's newsletter

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

10. Posts in Yahoo groups

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

11. Online media releases – free

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

12. Reviews of your book

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

13. Online media releases – paid

RATE 31-5:

COMMENT:

14. Media releases to print sources (ie newspapers)

RATE 31-5:

COMMENT:

15. Online chat group

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

16. CD Promotion with other authors

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

17. Newspaper article about author

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:



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

Municipal Bonds

In our April issue, we discussed U.S. Treasury Bills, Notes, and Bonds. This time, we're discussing bonds issued by states and state government subdivisions, e.g. counties, cities, towns, and villages. These bonds are called *municipals* or *munis* and are, in general, considered lower in risk than most debt instruments except for those issued by the U.S. government.

Risk, in this case, is based upon the *specific* source of revenue underlying the bond issue. The interest and, at maturity, the return of principal of a bond issued by a county or city is paid usually from the revenue generated from real estate taxes. *munis* issued by a state rely on income, sales, or excise taxes to cover interest payment and principal repayment.

An outstanding feature of *muni* bonds is that their interest, with few exceptions, is exempt from federal income taxation. Furthermore, if a *muni* purchaser resides in the state in which the bonds were issued, the interest will be exempt from state income tax as well. Therefore, a *muni* bond purchaser may expect to have the interest generated by the bond free of federal and state income taxes.

Of course, any capital gain or loss associated at the sale of a *muni* bond will be subject to both federal and state income taxes. The *muni* interest paid by the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands is *always* exempt from state income tax *regardless* of the official residence of the bondholder. Lastly, interest on *munis* accrue on a year defined as three hundred and sixty days and, therefore, a month defined as thirty days.

Continued page 4

19. Radio Interview with author

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

20. TV interview with author

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

21. RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

22. Video Book Trailer

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

23. Online interview with author

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

18. Other: Describe:

RATE #1-5:

COMMENT:

If you'd like to contribute to the project, you can download this questionnaire here:

<http://www.tri-studio.com/eazinesurvey.html>

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU!

Municipal bonds come in two flavors: general obligation bonds and revenue bonds. Once voters approve the issuance of a general obligation bond (GO), the bond's principal is backed by the taxing power of the municipality; interest is paid from collected real estate taxes. GOs can be issued in *Limited Tax* or *Unlimited Tax* form. The former means that the property tax rate may be raised only to a pre-specified maximum level to meet the debt obligation. The latter means that property tax rate can be raised to the level required to meet debt obligations.

Revenue bonds are backed by the receipts generated by the *specific* project for which they were issued. For example, the interest for and, at maturity, the return of principal of a toll bridge bond are paid from the toll (revenue) collected every time someone drives over the bridge. *Revenue bonds* have a greater risk than GOs since, for whatever reasons, revenue may turn out to be insufficient to pay bond interest or return principal. In that case, the bond issuer must declare bankruptcy. For example, after a number of years that toll bridge repairs were neglected, truck and auto drivers may decline to use the bridge for fear of safety, and thus, bridge revenues decline. In general, *revenue bonds* carry a higher rate of interest (yield) than GOs because of the potential greater risk.

Along with long-term bonds, municipalities may issue short term *Notes*. *Notes* are issued at a discount, like Treasury Bills, and mature within one to ten years from the date of issuance.

Munis are issued with a *coupon yield*. For example, a *muni* may be issued for ten years at an initial price of \$1,000 per bond with a *coupon yield* of 4.00 %. The *current yield* is determined by knowing the current price and doing the following:

Divide the issue price by the current price and multiple the result by the *coupon yield*.

For the example above, the current price of the *muni* is \$1020. What is its *current yield*?

Answer: $(\$1000/\$1020) \times 4.00\% = 3.92\%$.



City Hall
San
Francisco

Continued next column

Lastly, since *munis* are free of federal income tax, wouldn't it be nice to know the *federal taxable equivalent yield* of a *muni*. This is another easy calculation:

Subtract your federal tax bracket from 100%.

Take the *current muni* yield, and divide it by the difference found in (1).

Then, multiple the result by 100 %.

From our example above, suppose you are in the 30% federal tax bracket, then

Answer: $[3.92\% / (100\% - 30\%)] \times 100\% = 5.60\%$

This is important because you may wish to compare *muni federal taxable equivalent yield* with the yield of Treasury Notes, Certificates of Deposit, savings account interest rates, or money market fund interest rates – all of whose interest are subject to federal income tax.—before making an investment decision.

Happy and rewarding investing!

Ray

NadineLaman@aol.com

Five years after her last child abuse investigation, emotionally bankrupt Kathryn abruptly ends her self-imposed exile and returns to Los Angeles to reclaim her life. Relationships weave into the tapestry of Kathryn's life, expanding her reclusive world. Her friends and a cryptic letter written by a powerful man push Kathryn to reconcile the past. Who says, "You can't go home again?" Sometimes that is exactly what must be done. But, is it worth it?

"Very highly recommended...documents Nadine Laman as a superb author with the ability to engage and hold the reader's rapt attention from first page to last." Jim Cox, Midwest Book Review

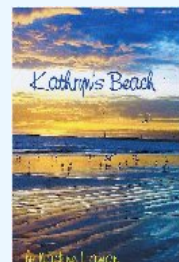
"Nadine Laman's Kathryn's Beach is a very well written story about human pain and tragedy and the ability to not only survive but to learn to live again." Cherie Fisher, Reader Views

"Nadine Laman does it again!! High Tide, the second book in the Kathryn McKenzie story, certainly lives up to the quality of the first book." Cherie Fisher, Reader Views

Witty and refreshingly unpredictable contemporary women's fiction.

www.NadineLamanBooks.com

Nadinelaman@aol.com



“What a freakin’ mess!” Frank yelled when confronted with walls of nearly impenetrable jungle thicket. “I thought rowing a hundred miles down the Amazon was bad, especially, when the boat flipped and the crocs almost got us. How the hell are we gonna cut our way through this? For two cents, I’d forget the whole thing. I don’t care if we go back to Chicago empty handed.”

“You wanna quit after all we’ve gone through?” Charlie asked. “You were so gung-ho about going into the Brazilian jungle to find *the Ruby Idol*.”



“Hey, the stupid map made it look like a piece of cake. It just said jungle. Not hostile, demon bushes that look like something you’d expect to find in a King Kong movie. Look at that damn thing over there.”

“What thing?”

“That humongous yellow flower. See how it’s opening and closing like it can’t wait to eat us for lunch.”

“Don’t let your imagination go wild,” Charlie said. “Remember what that old timer back in the village said about mirages from the heat when we get to the interior? That flower isn’t any bigger than a lily. You better take your malaria pills.”

“I took them. You’re the one who needs pills. If you can’t see that flower is big enough to swallow you, something’s wrong with your eyesight.”

“Okay, Frank. I’ll prove it to you. I’ll just pluck the damn thing.”

“Don’t be stupid. If something happens to you, I’ll be stuck here alone.”

“What’s gonna happen? It’s just a little flower.”

When Charlie walked toward the flower, Frank saw it turn toward Charlie as if it recognized his approach.

“Charlie! It sees you!”

Without answering, Charlie reached down to pull the flower from the soil. He heard a roar, but it was too late to avoid the yellow mass that lashed out. A second later, only his jungle boots protruded from the flower.

Frank screamed Charlie’s name as he watched the boots disappear. Falling to his knees in anguish, he heard a thunderous burp and saw a pair of boots flying toward him. Before he could duck, they slammed his head knocking him

Continued next column

NEW RELEASE FROM TRI STUDIO

Flight of the Gryphon

By Ann Durand

ISBN-10: 1-55404-451-0

ISBN-13: 978-1-55404-451-1

Genre: Science Fiction - Romance

eBook Length: 211 Pages

Published: May, 2007

Publisher: Double Dragon

Publishing

Imprint: Dragon’s Heart Romance



Purchase Link: [http://double-dragon-](http://double-dragon-ebooks.com/single.php?ISBN=1-55404-451-0)

[ebooks.com/single.php?ISBN=1-55404-451-0](http://double-dragon-ebooks.com/single.php?ISBN=1-55404-451-0)

Synopsis:

Katera would rather die than allow the Elders to present her at the altar of Kopa Na An. Her twin sister, Adrella, never returned after her summons to the altar, and Katera is tortured by the memory of her sister’s sacrifice. Intent on escaping a similar fate and craving an end to her suffering under the merciless rule of Askinadon, she constructs her own demise. Her plans are foiled when an attractive stranger rescues her from her attempt to plunge hundreds of feet down a waterfall to her death. The stranger takes her to a cave and releases her from her forced servitude to Askinadon by removing the high tech device implanted in her head. Encouraged by her new freedom...and her attraction to this mysterious stranger, Katera asks him to help her find her sister, if she is still alive, and free her people from Askinadon’s unrelenting grip.

Mikolen wants to help, but is so close to completing his ten year project...tantalizingly close. Helping Katera can only thwart his efforts by exposing him to Askinadon, his old arch enemy. All will be lost if Askinadon discovers that he was not killed ten years ago. He doesn’t need the risk. The only thing he needs is the exotic matter stored inside the Orb in Askinadon’s lab. With it, he can end his exile in this hellish world and create a wormhole to complete the stargate...the one that will carry him home. He has only to steal the Orb as his last act in this world.

unconscious.

When he awoke, he saw snapping crocodiles creeping toward him. One almost grabbed his foot. He emptied his pistol with no effect. With the jungle his only salvation, he grabbed his machete and rushed toward it.

That’s when he saw hundreds of huge yellow flowers turning his way.



(*) Michael Kechula is an award winning author who lives near Phoenix , Arizona . His credits include an award from *The Binnacle*, the official journal of the University of Maine . His flash fiction stories appear in publications in Australia , Canada , England , and the U.S.A. Email Michael Kechula at m.kechula@att.net.

What People Are Saying About “Don’t Be Impatient...Read a Short Story!”

Purchase Link: <http://tri-studio.com/RaymondGrant.html>

"With economy and deft delivery, Raymond Grant has slipped into the consciousness of everyman with the arrival of his new collection of short stories. A flash of humor, a flash of fantasy, a flash of many a sacred cow--all delivered with a liberal sprinkling of moon dust and marmalade! There's something

here for everyone--especially the time-challenged reader who wants a fresh, entertaining, and often contrary look at the world around us."

--Chick Lang: Fiction Editor Futures Mystery Anthology Magazine; Fiction Editor of Coffee Cramp eZine

"Turn a page of “Don’t Be Impatient...Read a Short Story! and read about sky-diving, turn another, and you’re in the old west. Read about a woman collapsed on the street and the rocker who writes a song about her, or share a woman’s terror of an approaching tornado churning across the prairie. Raymond Grant’s compassionate, humorous voice rings through tales as varied as life is, and he does it each time with admirable style.”
~ Nonnie Augustine , Florida , U.S.A. , prize-winning poet and short story writer.

“Don’t Be Impatient...Read a Short Story contains a delectable array of tasty treats that should more than satisfy literary flash fiction fans. What’s more, you can read any story in under five minutes. I was so entertained by the first two stories I read, I paid to publish them in my magazine. By the time I finished the book, I found myself addicted. I hope Ray Grant won’t make us wait too long for his next book of short fiction.” ~ Michael A. Kechula, Arizona , U.S.A. , Owner, *Flash Tales Magazine*.

“Don’t be Impatient... Read a Short Story! That’s good advice. Ray Grant has written a wonderful collection of stories that are short enough to read even if you have only a few minutes. Open this book to any page, and you’ll find a complete story, full and finished, that is imaginative and memorable. Grant tells a tale in just a few paragraphs, and he does it with skill and insight, along with liberal doses of wit and wisdom. His book will entertain and inspire you. It will make you laugh and make you think. So stop for a minute or two and read a short story. You’ll be glad you did.” ~ Charles Mossop, Vancouver Island, Canada, Author of the *Magistrate Lin Mystery Series*, the *Captain Square Mysteries*, and the novel, *Jade Hunter*.



Writing Flash Fiction

Undaunted by Dashes (*)

By Raymond Grant

Let’s focus on three *unique* uses of the *dash* (*double dash*). There are other situations, that we won’t consider in this discussion, where a writer may choose correctly between a dash or a comma.



1. A *dash* denotes a sudden break in thought that causes an abrupt change in sentence structure. For example:

Her husband – he had fallen asleep while waiting for her to prepare dinner – stormed into the kitchen looking like a bear awakened from hibernation.

2. A *dash* is used in dialogue to indicate that the speech of one person has been interrupted by another. For example:

He started to explain, “I was worried when I couldn’t find you at the –“

“Don’t tell me that, she interrupted, “I had to call a taxi.”

3. In sentences having several elements of a collective subject, the summarizing clause is preceded by a *dash*. For example:

Chopin, Stravinsky, and Ives – these were his favorite composers.

Now, let’s look at the uses of the *en dash* (*single dash*), which is half the length of the *double dash* and longer than a *hyphen*. By the way, the *double dash* is typed as two *hyphens* and the *en dash* as a single *hyphen*. So, the *en dash* and the *hyphen* are indistinguishable when typed.

1. The principal use of the *en dash* is to connect *continuing or inclusive* numbers – dates, times, or reference numbers. For example:

1995-2000

January-August 2007

11:00 A.M.– 6:00 P.M.



2. When the concluding date of a time expression is in the indeterminate future, the *en dash* follows the first number. For example:

**Jane Doe (1975 -) or
Jane Doe (b. 1975)**

Above: To Dash or Not to Dash continued page 7

Writing Flash Fiction

3. The *en dash* is used when one of the adjectives of a compound adjective is an *open compound* (such as New York) or when two or more of the elements are hyphenated compounds. For example:

- San Francisco - Paris flight**
- Post - Civil War era**
- Non - Urdu - speaking countries**

An *open compound* is a combination of separate words that are so closely related as to constitute a single concept. For example:

- Lowest common denominator**
- Stool pigeon**

A *closed compound* is a combination of two or more words that are spelled as one word. For example:

- Makeup**
- Notebook**
- Typesetting**

And the *hyphen*:

The *hyphen* is used to separate numbers that are *not* inclusive. For example:

- 1-234-567-8899 (Telephone number)**
- 123-45-6789 (Social Security number)**

A *hyphenated compound* is a combination of words joined by one or more hyphens. For example:

- Kilowatt-hour**
- Ill-favored**
- Love-in-the-mist**

Happy dashing! Unless you prefer hyphening! – Ray

WRITER WRY TOON BELOW: THE HYPHEN



NEW RELEASE

For Shrieking Out Loud by Joyce Faulkner
 “For *Shrieking Out Loud!* One minute it’s chortle in the gut funny! The next so poignant it nudges at the heart. Joyce Faulkner may single-handedly bring the two minute essay back into vogue.”
 Carolyn Howard-Johnson, author, poet, publicist, teacher

To purchase at Amazon:

<http://www.amazon.com/Shrieking-Out-Loud-Joyce-Faulkner/dp/0978515846>

To purchase at Barnes and Noble:

<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?z=y&EAN=9780978515850&itm=1>



Illustrated by Kathe Gogolewski
Paperback
 ISBN: 0978515854

Joyce Faulkner is also the author of *In the Shadow of Suribachi*, which won the Gold Medal for *Historical Fiction from the Military Writers Society of America (MWSA)*



Nothing binding ... writers and readers, this is ‘da place where we’re all meeting to party. Be there or B ☐.

www.NothingBinding.com Nothing Binding is a community of writers ... nonfiction, fiction, poetry, playwrights, screenwriters, copy writers ~ you name it. We are gathering together to make it easier for readers to find us and our works. Many of the writers are published, but not all of us, so it is truly an opportunity to follow a person’s writing career from the early days.

Nothing Binding is one month old. Beta testing of the site is going extremely well thanks to the tireless efforts of our hosts: Jerry Simmons and Ben Ruddy. BYOB (bring your own book/buy yourself our books) and join the party ... This is the start of something big! www.NothingBinding.com

Nadine Laman
 NadineLaman@aol.com
www.NadineLamanBooks.com

Check out this: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fu6f_4ab0uk
 and this: www.authorsden.com/visit/viewnews.asp?id=17039

Writing Tip:

Read your manuscript to a recorder, then play it back. This method will display a different sense than the visual one we use for writing, and will broaden and sharpen the editing process.

Winners: "Oh No, It's a Phobia Writing Contest"

by
Raymond Grant

In our April issue, we announced the guidelines, prizes, and our prompt – *Write a story in which the main character suffers from a phobia. Your story can be funny, sad, weird (not too weird), or whimsical. Let your imagination soar!*



We are pleased to announce our winners for April and publish their flash fiction stories!

- First Place:** "Phillip's Phobias," by **Susanne Shaphren**
- Second Place:** "Harold," by **Wallace Johnson**
- Honorable Mention:** "Step by Step," by **Olivia K. Alexander**

Susanne will receive \$10 along with a First Place Tri Studio Frequent Flyer Contest Award Certificate. Wallace will receive \$5 along with a Second Place Tri Studio Frequent Flyer Award Certificate, and Olivia will receive \$5 along with a Tri Studio Frequent Flyer Certificate of Honorable Mention. We thank each of the winners for their excellent stories and adherence to the contest guidelines. Furthermore, we thank each author who submitted a story to our contest. You certainly made the selection process a difficult one!

Now, on to our prize winning stories:

FIRST PLACE: Phillip's Phobias By **Susanne Shaphren**

"Good afternoon, Phillip. My assistant tells me you'd like to discuss some phobias."



secrets to? That's the most important phobia I have now."

"Perhaps it would be easier for you to lie down on the couch
Continued next column

"That's correct. At least it was correct until you walked into the room. I never dreamed that Dr. W. O. Wolfe would look like Angelina Jolie. What's the scientific name for the fear of making a total fool of yourself in front of a beautiful woman you'd much rather drink wine with and then make mad passionate love to than tell your deepest darkest

Winners continued

where you don't have to look at me. I'll just turn off the lights ..."

"No! Achluphobia tops my list of fears."

"And the others?"

"Clinophobia and Teratophobia. I'm sure you'll agree my phobias are far more suited to a five-year-old boy than to a slightly balding 55-year-old man."

"I would be tempted to inquire if there's a possibility that you've been afraid of the dark, afraid of going to bed, and afraid of monsters ever since you were five."

"My childhood isn't something I go out of my way to try to remember."

"That's something we could discuss for years if we were to enter into traditional psychotherapy. However, my assistant says you were prompted to make this appointment because you saw a TV news segment on my experiments with short-term treatment methods."

"Actually, I didn't see anything but the reporter's lead-in. I've learned that a tall glass of Bourbon consumed in front of a blaring television with all the lights on works better than any sleeping pill."

"I would prefer a moderate dose of an anti-anxiety medication like *Lorazepam* combined with some relaxation exercises and coping techniques to help you deal with those phobias."

"I'm sure if you agreed to spend the night with me I'd quickly forget all about the monsters in my closet and under my bed."

"Professional ethics preclude my dating patients."

"I was afraid of that. Nosexformephobia. What's that beautiful
Continued page 9

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_11/1102-5486577-8896114?ie=UTF8

needlepoint above your desk?"

"It says *Courage is not the lack of fear, but the ability to face it*. My seventy-year-old patient started it because she was afraid to go to sleep at night, and needlepoint helped her relax. She never got around to doing the author's name though. I think he was a World War II lieutenant."

"Did she die before she finished it?"

"Oh, no, nothing like that. She decided to sail around the world with a forty-year-old gigolo. I got a Christmas card from her last year."

"I'm almost afraid to ask. Did he spend all her money and dump her on some God-forsaken island?"

"No. He married her and left her a wealthy widow. I'm sure you don't want to waste the rest of your hour talking about other patients, Phillip. The quicker we tackle your phobias, the sooner we can discuss my policy about dating ex-patients."

Susanne's Bio: Susanne Shaphren's articles, essays, and fiction appear in an eclectic variety of print and online venues. Her email address is SusiSh@att.net.

SECOND PLACE: Harold
By Wallace Johnson



"So, how many of you have been institutionalized lately?" Harold's voice was nasal and monotone. His multi-colored wig shook back and forth as he spoke. "My name is Harold and I've...I've got problems." He looked down, took a cleansing breath almost as large as his size twenty blue

shoes, closed his eyes, and then exhaled. He gazed back into the small crowd. "Well...I guess I am supposed to make fun of you." Harold's voice quivered slightly. He adjusted his red nose, and then wiped his hands on his plaid tie.

"Do me first!" Yelled a bald man without eyebrows.

"Thomas, you look like a naked mole rat on steroids. At least your cuts have started healing since you switched from a razor to foam."

Continued next column



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.

Available from Wings Press

<http://www.1shoppingcart.com/app/netcart.asp?MerchantID=19895&ProductID=2571398>

Paperback price: \$9.95

ISBN# 1-59088-564-3

Available in trade paperback and eBook format

Winners continued

A bead of sweat drew a tan line down Harold's white face. Thomas ran his fingers across his scarred brow. "Yeah, wish I'd thought of that sooner."

A woman stood up never removing her gaze from the floor, "Harold, Harold, say something about me next. Something like how, unlike an illyngophobic, I will never drown in a downpour."

She turned to the reclusive girl next to her. "I have anablephobia." The girl responded by shifting her chair back several inches.

Harold continued, "Susan has looked down for so long, she can tell you what time it is by the length of her shadow."

"Come on Harold! You're supposed to say something funny, not something true," Susan sat down disappointed.

Continued page 10

Harold nervously wiped his mouth leaving finger streaks of red and black. His anxiety was increasing. He needed to focus; he needed to continue. "The next time you run into Susan, ask her the one question she can never answer-- what's up?"

A lab-coated observer laughed aloud, and then regained his composure. "Sorry, I didn't mean to interact. Go on Harold, you're doing great." He gave Harold a 'thumbs up' gesture.

"My name is Harold. I'm a coulrophobic. I have a fear of clowns." He looked to the back corner. "Can I be done now?"

Doctor Julia smiled warmly back at Harold. "Yes, you've done an excellent job."

Wallace's Email Address: owahay@carolina.rr.com.

HONORABLE MENTION: Step by Step
By Olivia K Alexander

She glanced back at me, and my hands started to sweat. She was so beautiful. Her red curly hair bounced off of her shoulders. Eleanor. Her name was sweet like honey on a warm biscuit.



The professor concluded his lecture, and she rose from her seat. Slowly, she made her way to my desk.

"Hello," she said. "I got the note you left in my purse. Wanna get some coffee?"

"Yeah, that sounds great," I shakily replied.

"Okay. We can walk together."

"No!" I instantly regretted the outburst. The few remaining students turned and glared at me. "I mean, I think it would be better if you met me there in thirty minutes."

She was confused, and for a moment, I thought she would change her mind. But, a smile was beginning to spread across her thick rosy lips. "Okay, I'll meet you there."

I waited for her to leave, and then sprinted to my dorm room. She had said yes! I combed my hair, threw on some cologne, and began my jog to the *Starbucks* on the other side of

Continued next column

Winners continued

We talked about everything that mattered; the weather, our futures, the past, and our favorite flavor of ice cream. After two hours of pretending our coffee had not run out, she stood up, "I guess I better be going. My next class starts in a few minutes." "Oh yeah, I should be heading back too." I sat there, looking up at her, my goddess.

"Well, um, would you like to walk back with me?"

"Oh," I hadn't considered the end of the date. "No, I think I'll stay here a little longer."

She sat back down, her eyebrows furrowed. "What's wrong Derrick? I thought we had a good time. Don't you like me?" Did I like her! Of course I did! I just didn't know if she would understand. She must have been telepathic, because she then said soothingly, "You can trust me Derrick. Whatever it is, I'll understand." Her eyes made me think that maybe she would. They were so calm, so accepting.

I took a deep breathe and began my disclaimer, "I just want you to know that I will understand if you don't want to see me again. I am different, Eleanor. I suffer from a rare disease."

Her face grew pale. She hadn't expected this. "W-what disease?" she asked, obviously bracing herself for an extreme blow.

"Ambulophobia," I replied, looking down at my hands. I was giving her a chance, a chance to walk away, but instead she sat down.

"I'm sorry Derrick, but I don't know what Ambulophobia is."

"It is a phobia; fear of walking. Everywhere I go, I run. I'm terrified to walk anywhere. So, you see, I can't walk back with you."

She touched my hand, "I guess we're lucky that I love to jog."

Olivia's Bio: Olivia K. Alexander is a twenty-three year old writer. Currently, she lives near Houston , Texas with her husband and two Miniature Schnauzers. In her spare time, she enjoys singing, reading, and attempting to write a masterpiece. One can read more of her writing at:

<http://charlieeleanor.blogspot.com>.

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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. Email Kathe at kgogolewski@sbcglobal.net with your submission.

Wedding Bells - TRI Studio's FICTION FLYER Writing Contest

By Raymond Grant



Here's an opportunity to have some fun, publish your story, and win a prize! Your new *unpublished*, story must be at least 300 words and no more than 500 words, *and* be inspired by the prompt.

Prompt: Write a story in which something unusual happens to the main character during a proposal of marriage, a wedding ceremony, a reception, or a honeymoon. Your story can be romantic, funny, fantastic, or weird (not too weird).

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

Guidelines: Only email submissions are acceptable. Please title your message: Fiction Flyer – "The Wedding Bells" Writing Contest: Your Story's Title by Your Name." Please submit the following information using Size 12 *New Times 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.

PROMOTIONAL TIP:

Call as many talk and call-in radio shows around the country as you can afford to and ask to speak to the show's producer. Pitch yourself as an entertaining guest with an exciting/controversial/funny (fill in adjective) new book.
--Rosalie Maggio
(one of my books. **How to Sav It**. has sold over a million copies)



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Delusions of Faerie by Kim McDougall (*)

"There are no fairies, I tell you!"

Mr. Doe pummeled his handcuffed fists against the orderly's chest - his wrists bruised and swollen from straining against the metal rings. Big Red grasped him firmly by the forearms, containing his outburst. Several fairies twinkled about their heads making soothing cluck-cluck sounds while Mr. Doe squirmed within Red's grip.

Skipper waited impatiently swinging his enormous ring of keys in an aggressive arc.

"Quit your hollering," he said smacking Mr. Doe between the shoulder blades with the flat of his hand. A troll had been washing the floor, and Mr. Doe skidded on the wet tile. Big Red hung on, and the two tumbled together into a heap.

"Sorrreeeee!" said the troll in his rolling accent. "Sorrreeeee!"

"It's all right," said Red, righting his stunned patient.

The troll dabbed at Mr. Doe's split lip with a dirty rag. Mr. Doe jerked away, spitting blood. He

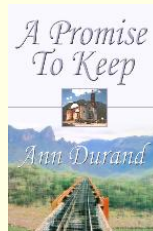
tugged at his handcuffs again, but they were made of solid, dwarf steel and held fast. "We should report you," Skipper berated the troll. "You could have killed him."

While the troll bowed, mewled, and wrung his hands, Big Red towed Mr. Doe down the corridor to his new room. A wraith hurried by with a clipboard clutched to its chest.

"There are no fairies!" screamed Mr. Doe.

Big Red brushed one of the tiny creatures out of his face and sighed. They paused at the cell door. The hospital, not long ago a college dormitory, still had many walls plastered with posters for sorority parties and self-help classes. Mr. Doe concentrated on one of the posters, as cracked and faded as his own certainty, advertising a Halloween masquerade sponsored by a vodka maker. For a few precious moments, he barricaded himself inside memories of a gentler time—a time when folklore was a means of defining human history, not a way of life. A time when a man could offer a girl a vodka martini without checking for pointed ears.

Continued page 13



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.

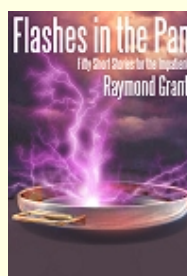
Michael Borbeau, alias Michael Browning, never intended to mislead Karen, or to fall in love for that matter. Only the need to protect his daughter forced him to choose a new town and a new name. Now, the whole mess is threatening to surface, and he must flee to keep his daughter safe.

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?

Available from Double Dragon Publishing
<http://www.double-dragon-ebooks.com/single.asp?ISBN=1-55404-215-1>

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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>

Page 13 Delusions of Faerie continued

"There are no fairies!" he cried, his voice rising to near hysteria.

"Yes, Mr. Doe," said Big Red in a pacifying tone. "Of course not."

"If you don't believe," sneered Skipper, "why did you run into the street screaming that the fairies were in your pants?"

"I was having a nightmare," said Mr. Doe. "Damn things were in my pajamas." Embarrassed, he looked down at his shoes. "But I'm okay now, really."

"Sure you are," said Skipper with a grin. He trapped a fairy as it fluttered by and dangled it by the scruff of the neck in front of Mr. Doe.

"If there aren't any bloody fairies, then what's this?" The tiny creature squirmed like a fish on a hook and made a soft keening sound. Mr. Doe's eyes widened. He looked away.

"I don't know what you mean."

The orderly snorted. "I'm sure you don't."

The cell was padded and empty but for a white jacket folded neatly on the floor and a small dragon snoozing in a corner.



"Don't mind him," said Big Red with a reassuring smile. "He won't hurt you."

"Who?" asked Mr. Doe looking straight at the dragon. Skipper grinned and made a twirling motion with his finger to indicate what he thought of Mr. Doe's sanity.

"You've got to put this on for the night," Big Red said holding up the straight jacket. "House rules."

Mr. Doe didn't resist as they slipped his arms into the long sleeves and tied them around his back. Several fairies buzzed around him tucking in material for a snug fit.

"Someone will come to see about your lip." Big Red frowned and shut the door with a definite click.

Mr. Doe sat helplessly back against the wall facing the only window. As he watched the day's fading light, a wee little man with pointed pixie ears in a blue work shirt appeared. He waved and began to wipe the outside window with a rag. Mr. Doe closed his

Continued next column

Delusions of Faerie continued

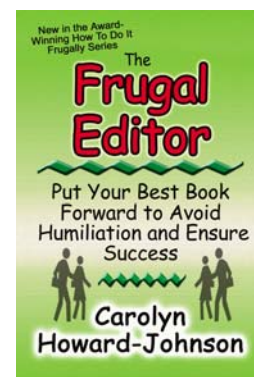
eyes. He could still hear the gentle snore of the dragon and the fluttering wings of fairies.

"There are no fairies," he chanted. "I am alone."

And so he was.

(*) Kim McDougall is a Canadian writer and photographer currently living in Pennsylvania. She has a B.A. in English literature from Concordia University, Montreal. Her fiction has appeared in literary magazines and her novel, *In A Wink*, was published by Avalon Books, New York. In the coming year, her fiction will appear in Aoife's Kiss, Ideagems Press, and Albedo One. You can read more of Kim's stories and view her photos at www.kimmcdougall.com.

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THE FICTION FLYER

Interview with Piers Anthony



Piers Anthony at Oasis 19, May 27, 2006

The Fiction Flyer is pleased to present an exclusive interview with the notable and prolific science fiction and fantasy author, Piers Anthony. You will find a brief biography below, followed by the interview.

ABOUT PIERS ANTHONY:

Piers Anthony, born Piers Anthony Dillingham Jacob on August 6, 1934, is best known for his science fiction and fantasy series, Xanth, and has published an inexhaustible number of books, over 130 to date. This includes the Xanth series and his collaborations, making him one of the more prolific science fiction and fantasy authors. The Xanth series comprises 30 of those books. He published the first in the series, *A Spell for Chameleon*, in 1977, and the latest, *Air Apparent*, is due in 2007, thirty years later. Many of his books have appeared on the New York Times Best Seller list.

Piers' arrived with his family as a child to live in the USA from Great Britain. He served in the United States military for two years, and taught high school English for a short time before turning to writing as a full-time occupation. Today, he lives with his wife in a remote area on a tree farm in Florida. He is a vegetarian, an agnostic, a liberal and a workaholic. He professes to dislike travel, and therefore appears only rarely at conventions.*

In the interest of helping aspiring writers, he maintains a website with an Internet survey on electronic publishers and related services. His site won the 2003 Friend Of Epic award for service to the electronic publishing community. On his website at www.hipiers.com, he hosts an informative, bi-monthly newsletter, which won the Special Recognition for Service to Writers award from "Preditors and Editors" circa 2000.

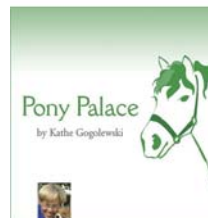
Along with Random House and others, Piers is an investor in Xlibris, an online book and manuscript publishing service.

THE INTERVIEW:

FF: When you begin a novel, how clear are you about how it will end? Can you describe your process for planning a novel? Do you usually do much research? Do you complete an outline before you

continued next column

From Amazon Shorts: *Pony Palace* by Kathe Gogolewski – a story for kids
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>

Piers continued

before you begin? How much flexibility do you allow for change in this process?

PIERS: It varies with the novel. A Xanth novel is largely unformed until I actually begin writing. I usually know the main character and a general theme, and the rest is unformed. For example, Xanth #32, I had the title, *Two to the Fifth*, and main story, the attempted conquest of Xanth by Ragna Roc. I knew there would be a showdown between Ragna and the Three Princesses, Melody, Harmony, and Rhythmn, then age 12. The cast formed as I addressed it. That novel will be published in 2008. In contrast the fifth ChroMagic novel, *Key to Survival*, relates to mankind's effort to stop the self-willed machines from destroying all living things in the galaxy. That was about all I knew, until my main computer system was out and I spent two months making notes on the novel. Then, slowly, it formed, with many characters and lines of development. Now I am about two-thirds along in writing this quarter-million word novel and still struggling to get individual characters and story lines worked out. It's like building a pyramid, block by block. Research? Not much, as this is sheer fantasy. When I wrote historical novels research was huge. Outline? Not much for Xanth, considerable for ChroMagic, and it changes freely.

FF: I understand the Xanth novels were fun for you to write, and *Pet Peeve* was your favorite among the series. What was it about that story that was fun for you to write?

It's that irascible bird, insulting everyone, using its companion's voice. The character made the story, for me. Another useful character is Demoness Metria, who always gets the wrong word. She enlivens dull scenes. Then she encounters the peeve, thinking it is

Continued page 15

Page 15 Piers continued

Goody Goblin talking. "What a nincompoop!" "How's that again, goblin?" Metria asks threateningly. And the bird, with Goody's voice, replies "Nitwit, dope, clod, ass, pinhead." More fun. Of course there's a romance as Goody gets his girl, and danger, even a war with robots, and so on. But the peeve colors it throughout.

FF: You started your career as a high school English teacher. How did you make the transition into writing?

Piers: I started my career as a writer, but didn't earn enough money to support my family, so tried teaching. Hated it, and returned to writing. It was an immense relief. My wife worked to support us until I got successful.

FF: You wrote a collection of short stories recently for Venus Press called *Relationships*. Can you tell us something about them and your motivation to write them?

Piers: An online publisher asked me for a story, so I wrote "Commitment". Then that publisher crashed. When I traveled to attend my father's memorial, I wrote another story in pencil during the interstices, "The Key". It found no market. So I decided to do a collection, and wrote the sexy "Hot Game", and went on from there. No market. Then an interaction with Venus led to their invitation for a contribution, so I sent *Relationships*. They loved it, published it, and crashed.



Piers at a book signing

FF: How is short story writing different from writing a novel, other than it takes less time to write a short? (I've included #4 because there are a lot of short story readers and writers that subscribe to our ezine.)

Piers: Stories are different from novels, and it's not just a matter of length. A story is essentially a piece meant to be read at one sitting. It's likely to be an exploration of a single idea, while a novel may have multiple ideas intertwined. Presentation of background needs to be efficient in a story, because there's not a lot of room. Just about everything counts. When I wrote "Commitment": and "The Key" I did the first draft, then kept returning to refine every aspect, trying to get it just right. A story is a polished gem, while a novel may be more like a trainload of coal.

Continued page 16

Absurdity *

By Raymond Grant

I once overheard an argument between two people. As rationality waned and absurdity swelled, one person said, "You've got to be a space cadet if you think that!"



A few moments later, the recipient, now rather piqued, retorted, "You're the most empty-headed person I've run across in a long time!"

Well, that set me thinking.

Just about everyone knows that an atom is made up of a nucleus surrounded by a constellation of orbiting electrons. An atom is very large compared to its nucleus; a nucleus is very large compared to any of its orbiting electrons. So, what's within an atom is mostly empty space containing a very small nucleus and much, much smaller electrons.

What's even more amazing is that when an atom's nucleus is probed, it turns out to be mostly empty space, too. Therefore, an atom is really almost all empty space. There's hardly anything there!

Now, molecules are made up of atoms; and a person is composed of a huge assortment of molecules. One can only conclude that a person is almost all empty space.

Absurd as it may seem the human descriptors, space cadet and empty-headed, are rather rationally based identifiers.

(*) One of fifty-four short stories from the new collection, *Don't Be Impatient...Read a Short Story!* by Raymond Grant, published by Red Engine Press and available in bookstores on 28 September 2007 .

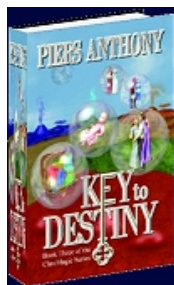
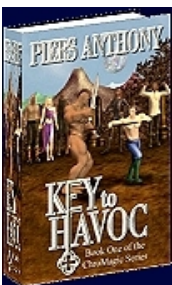
Purchase link for *Don't Be Impatient...Read a Short Story!* : <http://tri-studio.com/RaymondGrant.html>

FF: Painters are constantly painting themselves into their portraits, and writers write themselves into their characters. Do you feel you've written yourself into any of your characters? Are there any characters from your novels who you feel best exemplify you?

Piers: I do and don't write myself into my fiction. That is, I don't do it directly, and have never done so. Many readers think I'm the Good Magician in Xanth. No, that was my editor Lester del Rey. But I identify with every character, male and female, to some degree, some more than others. There's Crunch, the Vegetarian ogre in Xanth. There's Veg., the vegetarian character in the *Omnivore* series. There's the story teller narrator in *Tatham Mound*. None of them are me, but they do borrow significantly from me. But so do all other characters, just in less obvious manner. I mentioned D. Metria in Xanth, with her problem with words. I am constantly losing the right word, and struggling to find it. Fortunately my wife is better at words, so when I say "I was looking at the tree, the - the one I transplanted two years ago, with the hourglass shaped leaves -" She says "The Mulberry." Sometimes I even lose the words to define the word I want. That can be frustrating as - as that place where whatshisname rules, pitchforks - whatever.

FF: Touchstone/ABC recently bought the movie rights to *On a Pale Horse*. Do you have any additional news about that, or about Warner Brothers creating a movie from the Xanth novels?

Piers: Only that they are making a pilot for *Pale Horse*. As for the Warner Pictures Xanth option - they have been marvelously closed-mouthed about their plans. I like to think that does not indicate disinterest so much as plans so huge that the world would quake if premature news leaked out.



FF: Can you tell us anything about your current and/or future writing projects?

Piers: This summer I hope to complete *Key to Survival*, mentioned above, then move on to Xanth #33, *Jumper Cable*, about Jumper Spider, or a descendent of the same name. Thereafter - it's open, depending on my wife's health and my inspiration.

FF: What do you feel are the characteristics of a good writer?

Piers: That he (generic "he") have writing talent, imagination, and discipline. Theodore Sturgeon is considered to have been the finest stylist in the genre, and he had some phenomenal ideas. But his success was only a shadow of what it might have been, because he didn't like to write. So if someone were to ask me what I have that Sturgeon didn't, I would reply "discipline." Apart from that, I really

Continued next column



WRITER WRY TOON ABOVE: Dependent Clause

Piers continued

do like to write, and that's a worthwhile quality for any writer.

FF: How much do you feel luck plays into the success formula for a writing career? Is it enough to be a truly talented writer?

Piers: Luck is huge. Talent counts, certainly, but in my opinion the most talented writers are not the most successful ones. A writer needs the luck to have his manuscript in the right place at the right time. This is more than just getting it accepted and published. My biggest break came when for irrelevant reasons, I wrote a fantasy novel - *A Spell for Chameleon* - and caught the escalator up to national bestsellerdom. Skilled writers like Poul Anderson and Gordon Dickson could have done the same, but their fantasies were not timed right. Mostly chance.

FF: If you had unlimited funds to help new writers jumpstart their careers, how would you spend the money?

Piers: I am a millionaire, from my bestselling days, and I am already doing much of what I plan to. I helped the self publisher Xlibris get started and remain a major shareholder. I enabled Mundania Press to start. I maintain an ongoing Survey of Electronic Publishing at my www.hipiers.com site so that writers can identify prospective publishers and avoid the bad ones. And I answer my mail, much of which consists of questions about how to succeed at writing. If I had more money - and that may happen if the movies work out well - I'd probably move on to other things, like population control and feeding the world. I have ideas.

FF: If you had unlimited resources and power (not the fantasy kind!) to do one thing to make this a better world, what would it be?

Piers: I addressed this at the conclusion of *How Precious Was That While*. I would reform our relationship to the global environment, painlessly reducing human population to maybe half a billion people, eliminating disease, restoring the animal and plant populations to former levels, and making the air, earth, and waters of the world clean and whole. In short, fashioning paradise, as perhaps visualized by the Garden of Eden. Then maybe I'd kick that bucket, checking out, so I wouldn't have to see the mess people would make of it, again.

Visit Piers' website at <http://hipiers.com>

Not up a Dead Tree

© Christopher Hoare,
April 2007.

When I began to write I anticipated gaining the recognition, the admiration, and the rewards that would follow from the accomplishment of publication.

All I needed to do was learn to master the technicalities, devise the original and striking scenarios, and set these patterns into worlds of meaningful characters and success would inevitably follow. Don't laugh.

Of course, I met the realities. Readers are believed to be so fickle that no publishing professional can risk stepping beyond their comfort range. An agent would snap up my writing, if only he or she can discern their own values, understanding, and prejudices reflected in my output. It's called having an eye for a best seller, but it amounts to tickling the ego. The publisher's editor would offer a contract for the manuscript this agent submits, if it succeeds in tickling his or her ego. The publishing board would agree to this if they could see the signs of their past successes so plainly marked in this offering that they could feel certain their carefully calculated advance would be repaid a hundredfold. If you're new at the writing game, it takes you some time to realize you have a better chance of winning the lottery.

Actually, readers are not fickle at all.

Readers want to have their egos tickled . . . haven't we met this before? 'Readers' is a collective noun that attempts to circumscribe a huge number of idiosyncratic individuals. How can these corporate publishing empires and their minions hope to devise a formula that will allow them to predict the buying habits of the holders of such a profusion of tastes? The experienced and honest editors know the task is impossible, but they are unable to act against the inertia of the paradigm. For every novel published there will be a population x who love it, and a population y that despise it. It is axiomatic that most often $x < y$. Publishers try the scattershot routine – grab as many manuscripts as practical and let their authors sink or swim – in the 90 days the book chains will allow their books to sit unsold on the shelves.

Continued next column



Christopher Hoare continued

I *did* mention lottery.

Every reader wants something different in the books they are prepared to buy, and they want an infinite time and choice at their disposal to make their individual selections. Giving them less is a process certain to fail. The history of fiction over the past 200 years says the sum total of all these choices inevitably leads to peaks and troughs in the overall sales chart. That's why you can buy a copy of "Pride and Prejudice" but not one of "From Stage to Cross", which may very well have been an admirable piece of writing too. (Actually it's not. My mother must have acquired a copy among a number of other items at a jumble sale – and I thought I recognized the name of the author as being one who wrote a book I had found interesting. Not so – this must have been from the pen of his wayward uncle.) Without maintaining access to everything ever written, readers are doomed to miss much of the writing they would find valuable.

Unfortunately, the only way for you to find the obscure and lonely book you want amid the plethora on offer today is directly in opposition to the economic dogma of the times. You know that huge bookstore over in the shopping center? It's not big enough. You know that huge publishing conglomerate with its enormous financial clout? Its shareholders don't think it's rich enough for this. Collectively they stand directly in the way of you, individual member of the public, and your desire to pick up and read exactly the book you want at any particular time. There could be ways that you can access this elusive book, and they're also the ways that a hundred thousand disappointed authors can get their efforts into the public view – they are called e-publishing and POD.



Print on demand digital press

Continued page 19

Page 18 Christopher Hoare continued

(Yes, I know some of the present offerings are pretty terrible (so is some of the output from the majors) but let the reader decide.) The large publishing conglomerates watch these innovations like hawks – they watch for the introduction of inexpensive and convenient e-readers with a jaundiced eye. The last thing they want is for their control of the market to slip, and their huge investment in printing on dead trees to become obsolete.

There could be room for both enterprises, but only if there were thousands of small e and POD publishers for every imprint the corporate publishers can maintain – and that circumstance can only be attained if the present order is overthrown. The available dollars for the purchase of written information and entertainment is limited, so it must be more equitably shared. Readers must become convinced that buying print on dead trees is limiting their choice, and cease sustaining that market. (Yes, POD printing is also on dead trees, but only in the quantity ordered by customers, not extending to the overruns in remaindered books that are returned to publishers for shredding and disposal.) Only the buyer can propel the shift I suggest – the buyer of your work – your reader, dear author. Now which would you prefer, the 90 day lottery that conventional publishing offers you, or the perpetual availability of your words on file in a repository where they can be distributed – as either as readable file or POD book – at any time now or in the future? Is it a question of the dollar, or the possibility of a limitless future?

Christopher Hoare

<http://www.double-dragon-ebooks.com/single.php?ISBN=1-55404-450-2>

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Out of Time

[Author List](#)

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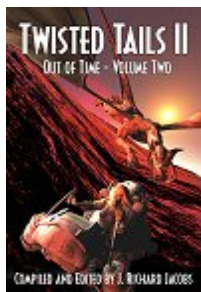
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To find out more about Christopher Hoare, click here:

<http://www.christopherhoare.ca/>

War

by Christine Alexanians

Death can happen at any given moment.
They were younger than some clothes I own.

They signed up for a brighter future,
They'll never reach the drinking age.

They joined the military to protect their country,
They invaded someone else's.

They were told they are liberators,
They were shot as oppressors.

Their budding youth crushed,
A folded flag,
A medal of honor,
A smiling picture,
Left for their loved ones.



Death happens at any given time.
An accident, tragic.
An illness, understandable.
An act of God, justifiable.
An act of man, unforgivable.

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WRITER WRY TOON ABOVE:

CAPITALIZE

Reader's Micros and June's Prompt

By Ray Grant

In our April issue, I asked readers to write and submit a *drabble* that answered the question: *Why did my choice of checkout line at the supermarket turn out to be the slowest?*

It was difficult to choose, but I finally settled on the drabble *Market Flirtation* by Gloria Watts, which is presented below for your reading pleasure. Congratulations, Gloria!!

Market Flirtation

By Gloria Watts

I wasn't expecting any excitement, not at nine o'clock on a Monday morning. My basket was next in line at the market checkout. The cashier, one finger fiddling with her hair, was flirting -- would you believe it -- with a lanky boy with greasy hair.

All I said was, "Excuse me, but...."

I found myself looking down the barrel of lanky boy's revolver. As I fell toward him in a faint, my hand brushed his face. He dropped the gun, somehow it went off, and the bullet ricocheted catching the girl's arm - silly young thing flirting like that.

June's Prompt:

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

Your story should answer the following question: What happened as the stoplight turned red?

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.

Happy writing!
Ray



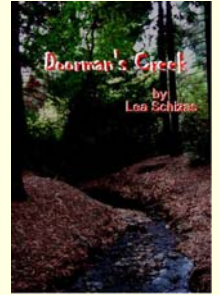
Doorman's Creek by Lea Schizas
Published by eTreasures Publishing

Ebook now available \$4.00US

Print book coming out end of March 2007 \$7.99US

Advance copies now available for purchase.

http://www.etreasurespublishing.com/Lea_Schizas/doormans-creek.htm



When Kyle Anderson and his two buddies decide to explore a cave hidden within Doorman's Creek, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton... and an unknown entity, throwing them right into the path of a serial killer.

Faced with a sudden gift of visions into past and present disappearances, Kyle must now track down who the murderer is before another family member gets killed.

"Doorman's Creek by Lea Schizas has to be one of the best books I have ever read, period. Part mystery, part paranormal thriller, Doorman's Creek is an incredible read that starts with a bang and just keeps going. From the moment the novel starts, you're taken on a whirlwind of secrets, murder, sacrifice and death that just gets better with every page." Anon

NEW! JUST RELEASED FROM AMAZON.COM

You've Got Me, Kid, an Amazon Short

by [Kathe Gogolewski](#) (Author)

About You've Got Me, Kid:

Nanette knew these kids would be difficult. Casa de Refugio only housed the children who had run out of other options. Wards of the court were sent here. When she volunteered to help tutor Cesar, a sixth-grader who had been taken from his mother, she expected a struggle. And she got it, but when she discovered the inroad to his heart, she played it to the hilt. All went well until an unexpected curve sent Cesar spinning out of control.



Kathe Gogolewski Says:

This story is a tale of fiction. Even so, it is notable, in my mind, that children like Cesar proliferate and often flounder within our foster care and group home systems. Not everyone, however, is set up to offer a home to receive these children. Yet, there are so many ways to touch their lives without turning over one's own completely to the process. Through a Big Sister or Big Brother program, volunteer tutoring, or by showing up for an art or music project, we can make a huge difference in the lives of these children. It means a lot when we can say to one of them, "You've got me, kid," if only for the day.

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