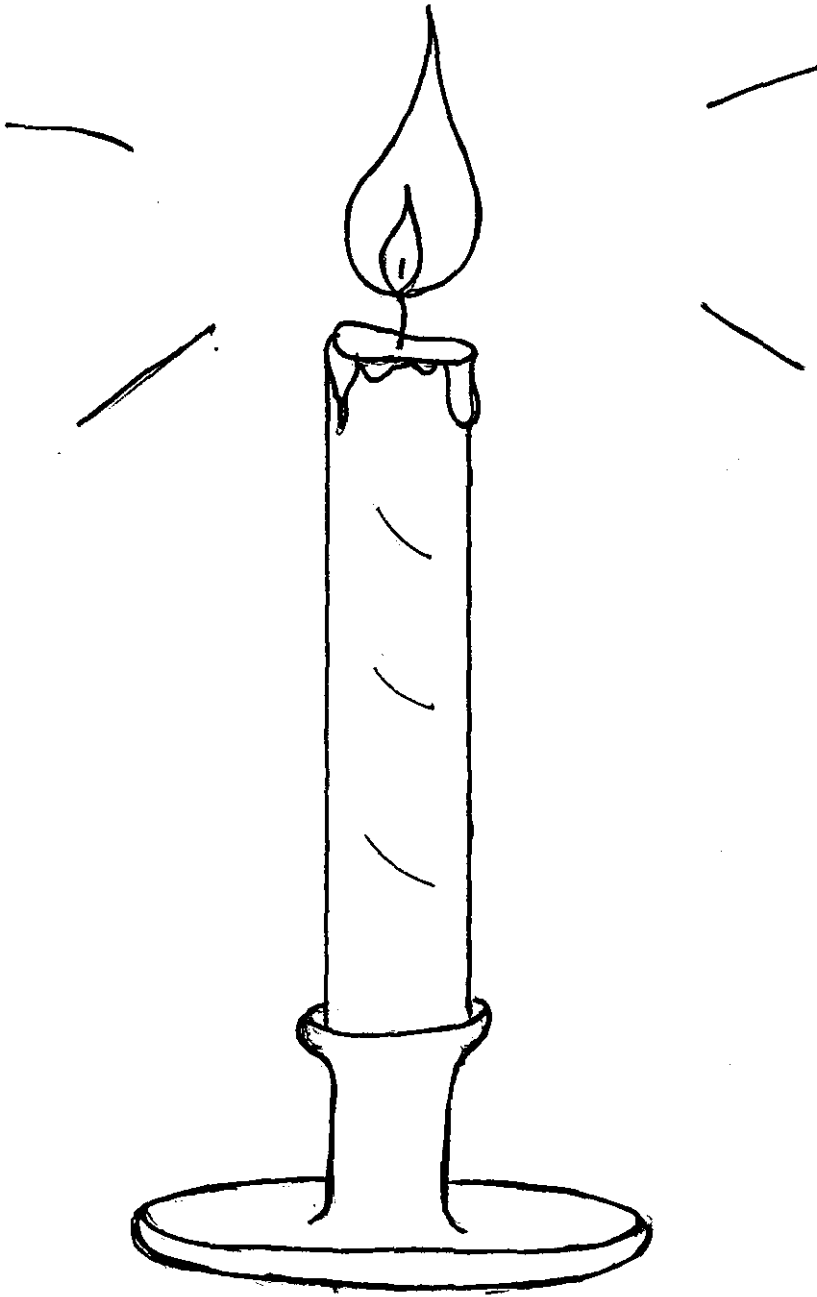


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C..W..A..

Literary Magazine

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Kelly McClanahan

Creative Consultants..

Mary Moore

Leslie Robinson

Inspirational Sage..

Bill Smith

Sobering Influence..

Dr. Steven Landry

Ballet

Ballet
to dance to love
beautiful graceful flowing
dancers costumes work performances
smooth soft quiet
to move to perform
Ballet

--Meredith Moore

Birds

Birds are beautiful
Flying over your lawn,
But they are not so great
When they wake you up at dawn.

-- Kara Burgess

Christmas

It 's almost Christmas
And children are playing,
and singing gayly
As the sun goes down
the lights cut off
and candles click on.
As we bow down to pray.
Christmas has begun and lasts all day.

-- Way Way Kennedy

Is It a Word?
by Richard Davis

The English Language is made up of many words which are made up of any number of 26 different numerals. All words have a denotative value, that is, a meaning that has been given to them and that anyone can find in Webster's. But some words have a strong connotative value, or a feeling that the sound of the word can evoke. For example, something that is flattened does not sound as bad as something that is squashed. A car that has been twisted does not sound quite like one that is mangled. There are some words, however, that have absolutely no denotative value at all. They have no real definitions and fall into the category of totally ridiculous words.

Some of these words come from books, movies, and TV shows that want to swear, but don't want to receive an "R" rating. Some of my favorites are "Frak" and "Felkercarb" from the old Battlestar Galactica series. Douglas Adams used various expressions like "Zark Off" and "He's a pretty cool Froonde!" Most of these can be translated into rather coarse words, but only if the reader is a rather uncouth individual.

Foreign languages provide an excellent chance to find ridiculous words. These do have real meanings, but since most people do not know what they mean, they qualify. German is a great choice. Try and guess what "sckmutzig" is, or "schlecht", or perhaps "ausgezeichnet".

By far the most popular ridiculous words are those created at the spur of the moment; times when a person wants to say something, fast, but can find no word to fit their feelings. Some of the most interesting words come out. "Baff" or "Wouost", for example. All of the words expressing pain originated this way, as in "Ouch" and "Yeow". I, myself, practice making these words whenever the opportunity presents itself. I would suggest you do the same: it's a great way to pass the time.

Dawn

To go to sleep, to awaken
Tired, groggy, exhilarating
The end, death, rebirth, Genesis
Radiant, colorful, beautiful
To lighten, to reverberate
Dawn

Krishjen Auld

Dancing with the Dead

by Bill Smith

They seem so alive -- you can remember them so well --
the last time you saw them -- how unexpected it was -- how
sad you were -- guilty -- hysterical -- drowning in the
mourning -- only because they're gone. But they're not dead
-- they are alive and well in your heart -- who else
remembers -- even you forget about them -- only reminded of
them from time to time -- one day we'll dance together under
the sun -- we'll dance on our graves -- and laugh in our joy
-- as we are forgotten by this life.

Despair

by Mary Moore

I think that I shall never see, a sight as horrible as
the kidnapping. As the little girl stood outside the store
waiting impatiently, her mother bustled around looking for
the necessities. Finally, all done, she exited the store
just in time to see the blue eyes of her child filled with
terror and tears as the man pulled her away from the crowd
and pushed her into the car. As the wheels shrieked away,
the mother ran after it with a burst of adrenaline.
Unfortunately, it was not enough, for the next time she saw
her daughter's body, it was in several pieces. The next
time she saw the abductor, his eyes were filled with fear
and helplessness as he felt the pain of the bullets from the
mother's gun ripping his chest open.

The Unicorn

The unicorn, lying glamorously by the beautiful water and moonlight, glistened like a star in the heavens on a dark summer night. The full moon shone on the handsome beast while the pure white hair iridescently glowed. His intricately twisted horn rose from his forehead with power and uniqueness as if he was in control of his life by means of protection. But something about this night and setting seemed beautiful yet frightful for this rare creature of God. For as he lay on a beautifully knitted blanket, keeping him clean and dignified from the dirty ground, it was as if God was rewarding him with pleasures for death was soon to come. He seemed trapped, though, by a surrounding wall keeping him from escaping from the extraordinary blanket. The feeling that rose upon the situation was one of uniqueness: as if this beautiful star was soon to be collected by God, and never seen again by mankind. The reason for this was not clear. Maybe he was wanted by God and the heavens as a creature man would never enjoy again because it would be enjoyed by life in the heavens. Pegasus was a unicorn ridden by the Gods and Goddesses in ancient Greek history. She was special and unique to the Gods only. God possibly referred to this when choosing his creature for the heavens. But death, in the end, actually wasn't an efficient description of this setting. It was now a sign of happiness as the unicorn lifted his feathered yet strong wings and flew into the heavens as Pegasus once had. It was recognizable that he was seized by God's warmth and love, for now the unicorn was in peace.

Leslie Tomlinson

Travel

To leave to discover
educating fascinating continous
river road plain peak
revealing planning packing
to decide to return

Travel

Eliza Pender

"Family"
by Harriet Gettys

My family is the best thing in the world to me.
Since I am the youngest of all the kids,
I get bossed around and sometimes hit.

My brothers are going to college soon,
So I will get the whole playroom.
When my brothers are gone I'll miss them very much,
But I'll be sure to keep in touch.

I will be a teenager next year.
I won't get to drink a drop of beer.

My mother works at my school,
Which I think is really cool.
I ride to school with her every morning,
But I wish she could come home earlier at the end of the
day.

About my father. He is a doctor,
But when he is on call it is such a bother.
On weekends he likes to rest,
But other than that he tries his best.

This is my family. What do you think?
Even if you don't think much of them,
I will tell you one more time--
My family is the best thing in the world to me.

"Learning to Fly"
by Geoffrey Fowler

I'm falling...
I'm falling...
I'm falling through the sky,
If I don't learn to fly soon.....
OH NO.....
GOODBYE!!!

"Kelly. Will You Be My Valentine?"
by Steven Landry

6:05

A period M period

Dazed, delirious, the buzzer blends into the dream.

Oh yeah. English test. First period.

Snooze alarm. My favorite thing.

Five more minutes. Then I'll study.

I won't learn anything now; I'm too tired.

Five more, and I'll be set to go.

9:05

A.M.

Wrong button. Second period.

He'll kill me. I missed the test.

Saturday.

Dreams by Leslie Robinson

We must dream...

For without where would we be?

If Columbus hadn't dreamed,

We may not be here today.

We must believe in something

To stay alive today.

Dreams are what we're made of,

What else can we see, we easily fall

Out where the world can get you down

Then dreams can lift you up again,

Pick you up, dust you off.

And set you forward again!

Dreams can see the good in us,

See the potential and the gifts

That are inside our complex anatomy

Hiding under fear and evil.

Anxiously waiting to blossom,

As a flower does,

To bear the fruit of man.

And to help the dreams of others

Just waiting to arrive.

Just do what instinct says

And you will be on your way

To fulfilling your dreams.

Just as has been planned

By the Man behind the wheel.

"THE GAME"
BY JOSEPH LUMPKIN

YOU PLAY BASEBALL:
FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME,
NOT FOR THE MONEY OR THE FAME.

BASEBALL IS LIKE LIFE:
THE HIGHS ARE HIGHER,
THE LOWS ARE LOWER.

BASEBALL IS CONSTANT,
WHILE EVERYTHING
HAS SEEMED TO CHANGE,
BASEBALL HAS BEEN CONSTANT,
BASEBALL HAD STOOD TALL IN MOMENTS OF PERIL,
IT HAS HELD AMERICA TOGETHER,
BASEBALL WILL NEVER CHANGE--
THE ROAR OF THE CROWD,
THE THRILL OF VICTORY,
THE PAIN OF DEFEAT,
THE CLASSIC CONFRONTATION, OF NOT MAN VERSUS MAN,
BUT BALL VERSUS GLOVE,
BASEBALL IS CONSTANT.

"MORNING"
BY STEPHANIE A. TAYLOR

ONE DAY I WOKE UP IN MY BED,
IT WAS HOT , SO I SAT UP.
MY BACK FELT A LITTLE DAMP
FROM SWEAT.
SO I GOT OUT OF MY BED
TO OPEN THE WINDOW.
IT WAS VERY DARK OUTSIDE,
AND VERY QUIET, ALL I HEARD
WAS MY DOG BARKING AT FROG.
THEN I FELT A COOL BREEZE.
THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN...
I SAW A PRETTY STREAK OF
YELLOW AND ORANGE ACROSS
THE SKY.
AND A YELLOW CIRCLE, THAT LOOKED
LIKE A POOL OF FIRE, SLOWLY, MOVE
UP TOWARD THE TOP OF THE SKY.
I HEARD BIRDS CHIRP, AND A CAR
GO BY.
THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN...
MY ALARM CLOCK WENT OFF,
AND I REALIZED IT WAS TIME TO
GET DRESSED FOR SCHOOL!

"Ghosts and Goblins"
by Molly Hornsby

Ghosts and Goblins
Goblins and Ghosts
No one knows just where they go

"Lost"

When a day's gone by,
And everything seems bleak,
And everyone just seems to be against me.
I wonder what's left ahead.
Will it just get worse?

The one who once loved me
Has turned and walked away
And the one that I once leaned on
No longer cares for me
Can I take it anymore?
How much longer will it go on?

I wonder if there's anything else
Out there to comfort me.
But I've still got the trees
And the stars, and the breeze.
One day I'll be a part of them.
This keeps me hanging on.

The map I made some weeks ago
Seemed so real to me
I thought I had it all planned out
It lasted for a few shining moments
Then I took a wrong step
Now I'm lost and alone.

--Leslie Robinson

"Lumpkin At the Bat" [A Tale of Wiffle Ball]
by Will Brumbach

The outlook wasn't jammin' for the Bellefield four that day,
The score sat 102--99 with one more out to play.
Three batters remained until Lumpkin got up there,
The Milford Roaders thought they'd win by a hair.

The first batter walked, the next singled.
In the hearts of Bellefieldmen a little hope mingled.
If this man could get on, and Lumpkin had a chance--
We'd beat them by the seat of our pants.

When this man walked, new hope arose--
Lumpkin would hit it over if he so chose.
In came the curveball, a good one at that.
Lumpkin was stunned and that was that.
SSTTTTIIIIIRRIIIIIKE ONE!

Lumpkin wasn't embarrassed over one strike.
He even said that the ump was right.
Another pitch came flying by,
While Lumpkin was looking up at the sky.
SSTTTTIIIIIRRIIIIIKE TWO!

Lumpkin wasn't too happy about that,
But he still believed in himself and his bat.
Cowbells on Milford began to ring,
Just before Lumpkin took a mighty swing.

Oh somewhere in this world people dance and sing,
Somewhere in this world beautiful bells ring,
There's a place where people are playing and no one likes to
pout,
But there is no joy on Bellefield--the mighty Lumpkin has
STRUCK OUT!

Hello

Words are tools of thought
Stronger than steel
Language is the foundation of society
Without communication, it would be dark
As if there were no sun
They are tools of expression
But then man's tools are so primitive
Our words can't describe truths
They only remove them
Man is so primitive.

Bill Smith

Nature

As I sit with fixed eyes on the glass
I so long to be one with nature
I stare out at a green tree
Wish to be a branch in the fir

I wish to be a flower
Blossoming on a hill
A flower that is cheerful
A bright yellow daffodil

Because people come and go
With money, power, and health
The only constant in the world
The land and sea hold my wealth

I see a robin flying by
I want to be free to fly
I don't want to sit here
And watch it go by

The fields are filling high with grass
The vegetation of spring
I want to lie in a grassy field
Dreaming of natural things

Leslie Robinson

Dreams

We must dream...
For without where would we be?
If Columbus hadn't dreamed,
We may not be here today.

We must believe in something
To stay alive today.
Dreams are what we're made of,
What else can we see, we easily fall
Out where the world can get you down

Then dreams can lift you up again,
Pick you up, dust you off,
And set you forward again!

Dreams can see the good in us,
See the potential and the gifts
That are inside our complex anatomy
Hiding under fear and evil.

Anxiously waiting to blossom,
As a flower does,
To bear the fruit of man.
And to help the dreams of others
Just waiting to arrive.

Just do what instinct says
And you will be on your way
To fulfilling your dreams.
Just as has been planned
By the Man behind the wheel.

Leslie Robinson

Dancing with the Dead

They seem so alive
You can remember them well
The last time you saw them
How unexpected it was
How sad you were
Guilty, hysterical,
drowning in the mourning
Only because they are gone
But they're not dead
They are alive and well
in your heart
Who else remembers
Even you forget about them
Only reminded of them
from time to time
One day we'll dance together
under the sun
We'll dance on our graves
And laugh in our joy
As we are forgotten in this life.

Bill Smith

The Drops Fall

Like tears of a scorned woman
It is delicate, with its graceful descent
It is wonderous watching the specks fall
Watching and wondering how God could create such beauty.
As the drop hits the ground, it splinters
Like a glass shattering
This is the rain to me.

Robert Clapper

Wealth

For people come and go
With money, power and health
The only constant in the world
The land and sea hold my wealth

I long to breathe crisp mountain air
And the breeze over the ocean blue
The treasures created by God above
The only things that hold true

The sun reflects a friendly smile
The heavens high above
The clouds come together
A peaceful, true dove

For people come and go
With materialism and wealth
The only constant in this changing world
Nature--she holds my wealth

Leslie Robinson

Clay-Brick

I can remember it so clearly, why I am here I don't know. They scooped me up and took me away from my peaceful home. They loaded us up on trucks and took us to that place. That dreadful place! As we entered you could see the cloud of smoke, rising from the chimneys of the ovens. Terror!! The heat was unbearable when we entered. They shut the doors and we were left to bake. When they brought us out we were all stiff, all of us, as if we were bound to our position, not to move ever again. They piled us up and carried us away. And they brought us here, this dreadful place. this prison of bondage, these shackles of cement, these walls that imprison me.

Bill Smith

"Sunrise"

The sun's blood red today.
Somehow that doesn't surprise me.
I look out the window.
Look at the ocean.
I remember a time when this place was quiet.
And the water was pure.
No more.
That was a long time ago.
I dream of another place to go.
No arcades and souvenir shops,
No garbage in the ocean,
No crushed cans and broken bottles on the beach,
Just a place where I can go
To sit by myself on the shore
And quietly watch
The sun rise over the sea.

--Kerry Stubbs

"WAR = PAIN"
By Patrick Otis

War = Pain
From mines in the ground,
To snipers all around.
It's from bombs that fall upon you,
To missiles heading for you.
It's from napalm
Burning up a camp,
To Harriers coming off the ramp.
On the land
Over the sea
Up in the sky,
And all around
IF THIS KEEPS UP,
WE'LL BE LIVIN' UNDERGROUND!

What Is Time

What Is Time.
To see go by.
We look upon the hour
As to watch it fly

How does Mother Nature
Whatch the time?
Her mountains show her age
As the creature creates a rhyme?

Even though we sit and ponder
We can always create and wonder
As the song of life passes by
We ask ourselves,
What is time?

Carson Strohecker

White Roses

by Mary Moore

The roses still sit on my bedside table; all twelve of them. They represent twelve exciting months of my life. They represent the person who gave them to me; Andrew.....

Just as the roses, Andrew is dead too. They stand there silently but at the same time, their red screams out death and pain.....

I'm drowning, drowning in my tears, drowning in my frustration, my confusion. I'm drowning in anger and my body is flowing with a hatred that I have never felt before, a hatred of death. I lift my trembling hand to my mouth and force the pills down, all of them.....

I lean my face over the roses and as my tears wash the sick flowers, their bitter smell fills my nostrils. The smell is taking me away, away to another place.....

I am in a field, all of Andrew's painful memory has been erased from my mind. I'm running freely through the green grass which tickles my bare feet. The sun is shining brightly, it warms my face, my arms, my whole being. The silk of my ivory skirt, wraps around my legs as I run, and causes me to stumble. But there is someone there. Strong arms are lifting me back up. The light is so bright that I can't see the face of him but I know those hands. Those are Andrew's hands. He takes my hand and we walk towards the light, is that the edge of the world?.....

I see a garden, filled with dozens of flowers but the roses in particular catch my eye. They are similar to the ones back in my bedroom at home, but these roses are white.....

Baptism: First Swim of the New Year

My shadow sways,
a gray membrane
washed among woven bolts of lightning,
streaking white and violent on the sky blue bottom.

I tower above the watercolor ocean hue
painted with silver scales
of sunlight.

Diving.
the tide breaks around my ears.
I am enveloped by my element:
Water.
Teardrop bubbles dart and glitter
(like mercury Jellyfish)
to the top,
where sky, cloud, and sun melt into a thin sheet.
Below, I fly effortlessly
in a new womb.
Breaking the surface,
my lungs gasp like a trumpet conch.
I am a new world Triton,
reborn of liquid life.

Cameron Howell

The Morning It Happened.....

It was cold. Freezing! Unbearable! Oh, it was cold, but it happened. Inevitably it happened. And no one could stop it. The morning it happened, it was cold. Yes, it was cold. I can remember how cold it was. Believe me, I can remember. I'll never forget it. Ask me tomorrow how cold it was. Ask me next week or next year and I will remember the cold. Yes, the morning it happened, it WAS cold. I remember the coldness, but strangely enough, I can't remember what happened!

Bill Smith

Petersfield

Not a town. but a village;
Not a neighborhood, but a brotherhood.
The dirt--the trash --the children
Happiness despite despair.
Not wanting to live there;
Not wanting to leave.
Pity from those who visit;
Love from those who stay.
If love is the greatest of all riches,
Then these people are very rich.

Petersfield

You may have seen worse--
You will see better.

Ed Eubanks

The Seasons

to be cold to be hot
beautiful different magnificent
summer winter spring fall
pretty extraordinary pleasant
to be reborn to change
the seasons

Chal Brasington

A Sketch of a Psycho

This man I see before me now is a man of dignity. An eagle, soaring on the wings of respect and honor. A man who is always willing to give a helping hand to anyone in need. He is a true citizen in all degrees. A leader in the community to whom many have looked up to for guidance. He is a successful businessman, a devoted husband and father as well as a prominent and faithful member of the church. This is surely a man of dignity, in the eyes of the public. But I know he is a con, a sick, demented, psychotic painter who has painted a picture of dignity for himself. A picture that masks his insane soul. This man I see before me is not an eagle, soaring on wings of respect and honor, he is a vulture. A black scavenger who violently rips and tears the flesh off rotten, stinking carcasses. This man has brutally massacred and maimed the bodies of many, many, victims. - Yet his true facial features remain concealed behind his mask. I have seen his face. His wicked eyes, his foaming mouth, and flared nostrils. Like a demon basking in evil. And I watched him laugh as he killed my family and I cried. I have met the true man, the wretched beast. I have seen within the darkest depths of this civilian. But soon my vision will perish, and with me, the truth of him.

Bill Smith

Behind the Green Latticework

All man's dreams dwell smoky and gray
Behind the kudzu.
Light- the shadow-beams filter through matted vine;
Leaves of dusty green, wax paper valentines (cut jagged by
lazy hands) with crayon yellow veins.

Brush the mesh aside-
A hollow shell, the ribs of a skeleton dinosaur.
Dreams drift here, awake and hsp-whispering
Of the men they haunt at night.

Cameron Howell

The Senchal's Tale
by Richard Davis

There was a Senchal, a man in charge of the kitchen of a Knight. He was a man of plain face, well into his life. He wore plain clothes and rode a fairly nice horse probably given to him by his liege. He was not a man of the world, and could not converse on many subjects. His employer was his life. He was totally devoted to the knight he served and thought him the best of knights, for he knew no other. This was his tale.

I would tell you the story of my lord, the quest that made him famous. My lord is known as Sir Hauteur the Vacuous. His family has protected the Plains of Pacifism for many years. At the time of my story, Sir Hauteur had never actually done any great deeds, but he felt that a man of his position didn't really have to. He was not extremely bright, but what he lacked in intelligence he made up for in arrogance. Sir Hauteur played no big part in the governing of his lands; he had assistants to do that so that he could focus entirely on his main occupation, being lonely. Yes, Sir Hauteur was lonely as arrogant men are apt to be. He longed for feminine companionship, but he felt that his lady could be no mere princess. She had to be godlike in her beauty and of the best British family to be worthy of him. So Sir Hauteur decided to wait, wait for news of such a woman to come to him, and one warm spring such news did come.

It was the time of the annual Pentecost feast, and all were merry, except, of course, for Sir Hauteur, who found the whole situation quite below him. He began to leave, but as he was doing so he heard the song of a traveling bard and stopped to listen. He sang thus:

Together, friends, must you gather
To hear a tale you'll find rather
Sad, about a lovely princess
Who's been trapped in an awful mess.

Abducted was she from her home
By a lord of evil tone.
Her name? It's not been spoken since,
Princess Comeley of Elegance.

He that stole her, his name is thus,
One Lord Rancour the Unctuous,
A vile being of great power
From whom many people cower.

He and his minions all take rest
In his Castle of Callousness.
To get there one must have much strength

And make a journey of great length.
Lord Rancour guards his castle well,
No one has yet his anger quelled.
Onto this Journey who will start
And win over this lady's heart?

Sir Hauteur was delighted. Princess Comeley sounded like a great find, and Lord Rancour the Unctuous sounded like a worthy opponent. He decided he must seek the princess out.

Lord Rancour's Castle of Callousness lay in the Arches of Armageddon, and getting there was said to be no easy task. The path would take him over the Hills of Hazard, across the Ponds of Peril, and through the Jungle of Jeopardy. Sir Hauteur was quite unimpressed by all this, so to make his quest more dangerous, he decided to go alone, save for one other to take care of all problems he felt were too simple for him to trifle with. This other was his squire, Squire Pluck.

Pluck was a big, thick-necked heavy, the kind of man you would expect to drink dark beer. He was a great fighter and would have been a knight if it weren't for his raucous behavior and slight aversion towards swearing fealty to anyone who would have Sir Hauteur as a vassal. Squire Pluck was ready to fight anyone. Soon the two began their Journey.

After a week or so of travel, they came to the Hills of Hazard. These hills were dangerous because of the Moredhel, a dark race of Elves that had claimed the area as their own and did not take kindly to visitors. This did not bother Sir Hauteur. He figured no Moredhel would attack him, he was too awe inspiring! But Squire Pluck was on his guard and itching to do battle.

As you may have guessed, the Moredhel did attack, yes and with a force of 50,000. Sir Hauteur's words were only,

Oh my, what a bother!
This could soil my armour.
Squire Pluck, be a good man
And take care of it if you can.

This news was all too good for Squire Pluck who proceeded to hack, slay, skewer, and generally do away with all of the 50,000 Moredhel, all for the greater glory of Sir Hauteur. Thus ended the first part of the Journey.

Some time later, the two came to the Ponds of Peril where they happened upon a boat. As they crossed the pond, Sir Hauteur remembered the danger of that pond, a great pond-shark named Swaj who took to eating people since there was little else to do in such a small pond. Presently, Swaj made his presence known. Sir Hauteur said,

Oh really, is it a must?
My armour will be covered with rust!

Squire Pluck, you can hold your breath,
Why not put your abilities to the test?

Squire Pluck then dove into the water to begin a three hour underwater duel with the pond-shark while Sir Hauteur took a nap. That night the two had fish for dinner. Thus ended the second part of the journey.

After another week of travel, the pair appeared in the Jungle of Jeopardy. Sir Hauteur was not worried for all that lay before them was the creature in the center of the jungle, Nemiculon. He was a strange creature with the head of a Pit-Bull, the chest of a lamprey, the haunches of a platypus, and the tail of a frog. He would ask questions to all that passed. Those that answered correctly could go freely. Those that did not were forced to remain forever and write scripts for MacGyver.

By and by, the two came to Nemiculon. He asked his question, "What is green, has two legs, and eats flies?" Sir Hauteur said,

Oh really, I haven't a clue,
and this does not interest me, it is true.
I don't have time to sit and fiddle.
Squire Pluck, could you answer this riddle?

Pluck thought, "Green? Two legs? Eats flies? That's easy, a frog!"

"Wrong," said Nemiculon, "It's Robin Hood on a high protein diet. Now you must remain here and write scripts for MacGyver, forever!" Sir Hauteur did not want to write scripts for MacGyver forever, so he simply asked Squire Pluck to take care of the creature which he did gladly and easily because he was so awesome. Thus ended the third part of the journey.

Soon, Sir Hauteur and Squire Pluck were met with The Castle of Callousness in the Arches of Armageddon where Lord Rancour the Unctuous was waiting. He announced himself, "Who challenges Rancour the Unctuous?"

Sir Hauteur responded, "It is I, Sir Hauteur the Vacuous."

Lord Rancour approached and looked Sir Hauteur over. "You?" he said, laughing, "Challenge me? Why that's absurd. How could an idiot like yourself possibly defeat me? Now run along and stop wasting my time."

Sir Hauteur was insulted and replied:

Lord Rancour, those words I shall make thou eat!
But first, I think it would be meet,
To give my squire a chance to test his might,
Before I come and take over the fight.

Thus did Squire Pluck take to battle, and a glorious battle it was. The earth shook, rocks fell, and dust rose up so that one could not see more than three feet. Just as

Sir Hauteur was going to take over, the rumbling stopped, the dust settled, and Squire Pluck's sword could be seen in the chest of the evil lord. Lord Rancour the Unctuous had been vanquished!

The time had come for Sir Hauteur to claim his prize, Princess Comely. He rushed to her cell and broke down the door exclaiming his love all the while, but his first glimpse of the princess was a surprise, for he found, to his dismay, that the Bard's tale had been altered after being sung so many times. Her correct name was not Princess Comely of Elegance, but Princess Homely of Corpulence. Yes, and well was she named. She was the ugliest, most disgusting obese woman he had ever seen in his life, but Sir Hauteur could find no way of getting out of marrying her, and, as it turned out, she was very loving and experienced in matters of state. He took her home where he married her several months later and had many, plump, little children. As for Squire Pluck, he moved to France where he thought his abilities would be more appreciated.

The End

Mayhem

Chop, chop, chop it goes. The grunts and moans of the axman add to the cry of the green beast. A little more hacking to go and the animal will fall to its death. It will be plundered, with a great scream like thunder. Then the heartless man will cut off its arms and chop it into pieces and throw it on a truck. And the truck will take it to a mill and grind it up and process it into paper. Then a man will sell it to another man who will crumple it up and throw it away. Meanwhile the man stalks and kills another, and another, and another. Ironically he kills the green leaves of life. In pursuit of the green leaves of greed.

Bill Smith

The Last Hunt
by Kelly McClanahan

"Air Kenya Flight 206 for Nairobi now boarding at Gate 7. Departure is in ten minutes. Repeat. Air Kenya..." The voice was filled with static as it was broadcast around the airport.

Mark Cassidy was one of the first people on board. He had a long day ahead of him, and he needed his rest. For, when he arrived, he, the world-famous big game hunter, was going to single-handedly hunt and kill the world's rarest animal, the extremely elusive African red panther.

When Mark found his seat he discovered that it was next to a Hindu. He asked, "Are you a guide?" The Hindu smiled at him and replied, "No, sahib, I am a psychic."

This brought a gleam to Mark's eyes. "I am going on a hunt for the rarest creature on Earth," he said. "Tell me if the hunt will be successful."

"I cannot tell you that," said the Hindu. "It depends on how you define success." To this reply Mark curtly responded with a touch of scorn in his voice, "You're nothing but a fake," and proceeded to go to sleep.

"I must rest. I must be ready for the hunt." These thoughts raced through his head as the plane lifted from the ground. He was much too excited to sleep, with pictures of the animal flashing against the backs of his closed eyelids, but he forced himself, telling himself that he could plan the hunt later.

He awoke with a start to behold flashing lights and alarm buzzers sounding all around. A voice crackled through the intercom. "This is Captain Williams speaking. We have lost our two starboard engines and are going to have to make an emergency landing. Please observe the flight attendants at the front of your cabin. They will demonstrate how to get into the crash position. This is also shown on the yellow sheet in the back of the seat in front of you."

Mark jerked up the shade to his window. For a split-second the ground below was illuminated by a bolt of lightning. It was nothing but jungle down there! "How are they going to attempt to land in this?" The words escaped his lips before he could stop them. The stewardess next to him reached over and shut his shade and said, "Don't worry. We'll manage." Those were the last words he remembered.

He woke up in the middle of a smoldering wreckage. Above him a patch of the sky was clear where the plane had plowed down the trees as it came. "So, the plane's crashed. I'd better look for survivors," he thought. But first he found the part of the jet that had been the cargo bay and fished out his rifle, thinking, "Just in case."

The view was grim. There was blood everywhere, but he couldn't seem to find any bodies. "Well," he thought, "the scavengers must have beaten me to the remains. But what kind of scavengers are these?" There were not even bones left. and the tracks he found near one of the puddles of blood were of a kind that he had never seen before. They

were similar to bird tracks, with three toes and a claw on each toe, but they were larger than any bird tracks he knew of, for they were each about two feet long and one and a half feet wide.

Suddenly an eerie cry from above pierced the air, a cry so wild and untamed that he was afraid to even look up to see what type of animal would utter such a cry. He did, though, and the image that met his eye was so terrifying that he instinctively turned his head. He had heard legends from the natives about a creature called the Mweike Mkemde, the "great leather-wing," and he was sure that the beast circling above was indeed that monster. It was larger than any creature he had ever seen; its dimensions were similar to those of the roc that Sinbad the Sailor described in the Arabian Nights. It looked like the beast Rodan from old monster movies, with a long, sharp beak and head and long, pointed wings. Its stare seemed to bore holes through anything in its line of vision.

"Boy, I wonder what I would get for bringing back a prize like that." As he was pondering whether or not he should try to kill this monster with only the rifle he had, the leviathan swooped down and landed about fifty yards away. A closer look revealed that it had found a body that had apparently gone undiscovered by either the other scavengers or Mark.

At this point he decided that the chances were good that he could kill the creature at this close distance by

putting a bullet between its eyes. Mark's action of raising the gun to his shoulders, however, drew the beast's attention. and, having not noticed Mark until now, it rose up into the air on its great wings and swooped down on its next victim. emitting a shrill screech that must have meant something like "Ah, fresh meat."

Mark emptied his rifle into the creature's monstrous head. but the shots didn't even seem to phase it. Mark exclaimed, "My god, it's bulletproof!" and screamed as the monster's claws knocked him completely off his feet and bore his body up into the air, limp as a dishrag.

The door to the cockpit opened, and a stewardess stepped in and whispered in the captain's ear, "The man in 13A just screamed in his sleep and died. I think you'd better have a look." With that she exited, and the captain soon followed. When Williams arrived at the scene he observed that the man seated next to the body was a Hindu. The captain asked the Hindu, "Do you know anything about this man's death?" pointing a finger at the body.

The Hindu turned up to him and simply replied, "He found the rarest animal in the world. Perhaps the hunt was too much for him." And then he smiled.

The Moose
by Steven A. Landry

My parents would probably be mortified if they knew that I counted a janitor as one of the most influential people in my life. The plain truth of the matter was that he was much more than what he always called an "outhouse cleaner," and everyone who knew him would testify that he was a man we need more of.

The Moose, Paul Shea, was a man who had once been a mayor of one of the largest towns in eastern Connecticut. He didn't make a big thing out of it, in fact, he never really appeared to make a big thing out of anything at all. He had a couple of children, a wife he never associated with any more, and that was probably the reason for his fall from favor with the world. He loved roses, partially because his town was known as the Rose of New England, but more importantly, because he embodied the essence of a rose. If he knew I compared him to his favorite flower, he would have politely told me I was full of it. But the plain truth was that he was a gentle, kind and loving man hiding none too successfully under a gruff exterior.

Moose moved at his own pace, as all men who are not in a hurry to do anything but enjoy life can do. I remember the time he shared what he called his secret of life with me. "All you gotta do is carry around a piece of paper with you. That way, it always looks like you're busy. People'll leave you alone if they think you're busy." The Moose's pace was one where no one would ever accuse him of being too busy. But he wasn't worried about impressing anyone, and he really could have cared less about what most people thought, and doubly so for people in positions of authority. As I said, he had been there, and he knew first hand what a sham most people in authority operated under. He always said that he wasn't ever going to be important enough to have authority; only people who needed to be important needed authority.

Moose owned almost nothing. He had a navy blue pea jacket, and then later he had one of those all-purpose green army jackets. The coach gave him a bunch of baseball hats and sweatshirts with school insignias on them, and he was soon in the uniform that he wore for the rest of the time that I knew him: jeans or sweats and his baseball cap, a bright yellow hat with a blue brim and a blue C on the front. In fact, the cap became such a fixture that we never quite knew whether he wore the hat or the hat wore him.

When we first met him at the boarding school where I taught, he was down on his luck. I guess he assumed that the only kind of work that was fitting for a man who was as far down as he was involved cleaning up after other people's messes, but he couldn't fool us for too long. At any rate, even if he could have fooled the adults who worked at the boys' school, he never could have fooled the kids for too long. You just can't fool kids, no matter how good you are.

Soon after his arrival, he was hanging around with the kids in the basement of the gym, playing pinball, buying them cans of soft drinks, and letting them tell him stories of how rotten the teachers were treating them, how their parents never understood what they were going through, and how hard it was to grow up. I suspect that he could have told a few stories of how tough it was on himself, but that wasn't his style. Moose was a sounding board, but he always towed the party line, he always supported parents and the school, but he never ticked the kids off doing it. After they got it off of their chests, and he told them how it really was, the kids were ready to face another day of being kids.

Probably the parents in the real world would not have thought too highly of a boarding prep school's best influence on the kids of the school being the "outhouse cleaner." Probably they would have desired a more normal influence. Like a Yale graduate who taught the classics, or a preppy guy in a corduroy jacket and a school tie, but the plain truth of the matter was that Moose touched the kids where they lived in a way no one else could ever have done. Parents might have even liked the influence to be a religious type of person, but even the priest on the faculty recognized the unpretentious genius in Moose. One year, they even dedicated the yearbook to Moose: it was one of his fondest moments. On the day the dedication was released, Moose said to me "Imagine that, Steve-a-rino. They dedicated the yearbook to a janitor-- a outhouse cleaner that doesn't even have a pot to pee in!"

I remember one time, when I had just blasted a student out of my office, after seeing him in trouble for the millionth time that week, and Moose was in the hallway of the classroom building. The whole world was aware just how angry I was, and I'm sure I was a sight when I looked out into the hallway after the one-man show. The Moose glided down the hall, and looked at me. "Kind of mad today, aren't you?" he asked gently.

"Moose, I am sooo ticked right now I could spit!" I was not to be denied my moment of indignant wrath. "I don't have any idea what to do with Murphy except to put him out of his and the world's misery." Murphy was an eighth grader at the time, a skinny, black haired five foot dynamo whose *raison d'être* was to torture adults. And he was good.

"Don't be too hard on him, Rino," Moose stated calmly. "He's a good kid: he just needs someone to tell him that."

"Moose, he just got thrown out of his third class this week, he's got caught up after lights out twice last night alone, and he's got the makings of a mass murderer; and you tell me he's all right! You gotta be kidding me! He won't live to see twenty-one, you mark my word." I couldn't be wrong on this kid. I knew kids, too.

"He's just a little confused. He's a good guy; my Murphy. Sides, he ain't murdered any masses, did he? We can ask the Padre if he did."

"Moose. you just don't know what you're talking about with this JD. This kid is rotten." I was not about to have Moose not let me enjoy my rage.

"Nope. Just confused, and he needs someone to tell him they give a flying fig about him. Course, I don't have all the fancy degrees that you young fellas got, and you know what you're doing, so I'll just clean the bathrooms." He continued down the hallway, leaving me alone to enjoy my rage.

I remember thinking that he should do exactly that and leave the discipline to me--that was my job and I did a darn good job of it. Besides, what did he know about education, it hadn't done him any good. But later that day, I asked Murphy if he had made through the last two classes without getting thrown out. I was as good a wise guy as he was, and I couldn't let it go any more than Murphy could get the bitterness out of his life.

Murphy looked at me. "What is it to you? Haven't you had enough fun busting me for one day?"

Apparently I had not, because I grabbed him by the collar and shoved him up against the wall. "No, Murphy, I haven't." Then I calmed down, let his feet touch the ground, and I smiled at him and I said "I just wanted to see if the second part of your day got any better."

"Yeah, well, if you really cared, I didn't get thrown out at all this afternoon. Disappointed?"

"Yeah, I am. I was hopin' to get you in my office again tomorrow, but I guess you got me this time. I'm getting kind of used to you being in trouble, and I like habits. Maybe I'll get you tomorrow. You can't make it through a morning without getting in trouble."

"Dollar." He challenged.

"Done." I answered.

Promptly at noon the next day, I was a dollar poorer. I smiled at Murphy when I gave him that dollar.

Moose saw me later. He handed me a five dollar bill. When I asked him what that was for, he smiled and said "For Murph. If he doesn't get kicked out of class tomorrow, you give him a dollar. When you run out of money, you tell me. I'll give you more."

Darned if I didn't have to give up each of those five dollars. It didn't happen all in one school week, but it happened, and I never would have believed it in a million years. But Moose knew. The next time he gave me ten dollars, and I gave up every one of those dollars. Murphy probably thought I was a sucker. He was getting cigarette money and all he had to do was keep out of trouble and he'd get paid for it. I never told him where the money was coming from: Moose would have denied it anyway.

The Moose and Lou, the coach, became fast friends. Lou always said that the most important people in the world were janitors and cooks, and he made sure that he was friends with them. They had a lot in common. Both loved kids, and were willing to accept them however they showed up.

Changing a kid was a function of accepting them for what they were when you first met them, and daring to imagine the future. Each teased their "boys" to the point of ridicule, but the kids always knew that it was done in a spirit of love, brutal though the teasing could be.

Lou and Moose started the Moose Club, and the toughest kids in the school hung out with them. The two of them watched and listened and helped and nurtured and worked. Tough kids helped students from mentally retarded halfway houses, giving them Christmas and Easter parties.

Almost out of nowhere, Moose changed. He began to be preoccupied, sometimes even argumentative. He still had kids flocking around him, but he got negative towards adults. At the end of the school year, he quit and took off and didn't even say goodbye to us. We heard from him later when Lou got a postcard from California. "Always wanted to see California. Now I have. See you someday soon. The Moose."

He came back, and when he did, we saw how skinny he was. He checked in to the cancer ward at the State hospital near the school, and became a memory. I guess even roses die. When Lou went to the funeral, he placed his cap on his chest before they closed the coffin.

"Sustained by Nature"

The one I needed most
Has moved on to better things.
I'm hurt, a familiar feeling.
And those who have always loved me
Are nowhere to be found.

How much pain can a person take
Before she breaks and shatters
Just like a crystal ball.
But the trees stand tall and will
Support me forever.
The river will come in
And wash me free of the pain.

One day I'll catch my falling star.
That's why I can't close my eyes.
I'll have one wish.
I'll wish to be with the trees and stars
And sky.
There I'll stay forever.
There all the pain and people will be gone.

--Anonymous

Battle of the Billiard Hustlers

by Kelly McClanahan

Once upon a time, there were two gods who were the best billiard hustlers ever. Their names were Universal Fats and Celestial Sam. Universal Fats was the proven champion and had won the much desired Gold Eight Ball seven millenia consecutively. Celestial Sam, however, was virtually unknown, but he wished to make a good reputation for himself by challenging Universal Fats, the best of the best pool hustlers. to a billiard match.

So the challenge was sent, and Universal Fats accepted, expecting a quick victory over this "amateur," as he called Celestial Sam. However, Sam had the gift of mathematics, and he figured out a way to beat Universal Fats. He told Fats that he could break the pack so that all of the balls would continue rolling, but none of them would ever enter any of the holes. Fats took him up on this bet, secretly planning to break the pattern with the cue ball. Sam broke the pack, and the balls ricocheted off the sides in such a way that all of them fell into circular paths around the eight ball. Fats then shot the cue ball at the revolving balls, but the revolution created a magnetic field which kept the cue ball from striking any of the balls. These balls were eventually called planets in a solar system, and we call the eight ball the Sun. To this day, Fats has refused to admit defeat, and when his shots send the cue ball through the pack, we on Earth see what we call a full moon.