



Lewiston Writers' Group

Newsletter

February, 2010



The Lewiston Writers' Group meets every other Monday at the Lewiston Library from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The group consists of local area residents who meet regularly to discuss and critique their writing efforts, and to exchange ideas and information about the craft.

Please join us!

2010 Meeting Dates

February 8, 22
March 8, 22
April 5, 19
May 3, 17
June 7, 21
July 5, 19
August 2, 16, 30
September 13, 27
October 18
November 1, 15, 29
December 13, 27

On Writing

"You have to keep close to people who see you as a writer. In this sense, new friends may be the best friends."

-David Bradley

Writing Contests

If you would like to be added to our list to receive emails regarding upcoming writing contests, please send a request to DLSHERMAN1@yahoo.com.

Newsletter Emails

If you would like to be added to our list to receive this newsletter regularly via email, please send a request to DLSHERMAN1@yahoo.com

How to Make Your Novel a Page Turner

By Elizabeth Sims Writers Digest 1/12/10

Never underestimate the power of suspense—in any genre. Use these surefire techniques to make your book one readers won't be able to put down.

When my father was a little boy, one of the last of the touring vaudeville companies came through his podunk town, and he got to see the show. The centerpiece was a one-act drama featuring a pretty girl in peril. The climactic scene began quietly, with her sitting next to a lamp, sewing. As the mustachioed villain sneaked onstage, the audience began to murmur in alarm. When the lovely young thing gave no sign of sensing the danger, the audience's murmuring gained urgency and volume.

The innocent girl continued to sew her apron.
Closer crept the villain, drawing a knife from his coat.
In full voice now, the audience warned her: "Behind you. Turn around!"

When, incredibly, she bowed her vulnerable neck more deeply over her work, they rose from their seats, cupped their hands around their mouths, and shouted with the utmost diction: "Beee! hind! you! Look! beee! hind! yooooou!"

Unbearable suspense.
Ah, to be a master of it.

I used to beg my dad to tell that story, and I'd laugh maniacally every time. I fear that was what really sparked me to be a writer. The author of that playlet, subpar though it may be by today's standards, accomplished what we all want: to hold audience members so firmly in our grasp they feel they've entered the story themselves.

And that, I guess, is a pretty good definition of a page-turner.

Today's best novels make readers so desperate to know *what happens next* that they'll stay up reading well past midnight, blistering thumbs and all, until THE END. Then and only then will they be able to relax, their souls flooded with satisfaction, relief and peace. Only to be followed—ideally!—by a gnawing sense of unfulfillment, anxiety and a compulsion to *read more books by you*.

It's our responsibility to feed their addiction.

Looking at successful authors and their polished products, you might conclude they must have some literary alchemy at their fingertips, or they really are slightly superhuman, or they've made a deal with the devil. (If only it were so easy!)

But no: Writing a page turner is an art and a craft. And you can learn to do it.

PLOT FROM THE GUT. You've got a good idea for a story, you've got a few characters in your head, you've got some stuff that happens. Now what?

At this point many people just start writing, hoping their book will take shape as they go. The streets of New York are littered with queries from such authors. To lift your work from the gum wads and pigeon merde, you need a coherent plot.

Now, you can get pretty complex with plotting. You can try to follow this or that guru's rules, you can try to emulate this or that bestselling author. But if you do, you'll likely find that the whole thing gets horribly complicated way too soon.

The following method for forging a compelling plot is as good as any, and simpler than all of them.

THE HCM PLOTTING METHOD

1. List the Heart-Clutching Moments you've already thought of—you know, those pivotal points in your story that will evoke all the intensity of that "look behind you!" response in your readers.
2. Think of more.
3. Construct your story around them. I emphasize the difference: Don't focus on your loosely formed story line. Focus on the key points in your story.

WHAT IS AN HCM?

- Love at first sight (Marius Pontmercy meets Cosette)
- A huge moral lapse (Judas takes the money)
- Murder (Miles Archer's sets Sam Spade in motion)
- Death by other means (Injun Joe starves to death in the cave)
- A refusal of grace (Mayella Ewell sticks to her story in spite of taking the courtroom oath)
- Nature gone wild (shark dines on first recreational swimmer)
- Someone standing up to corruption (Shane picks up his gun again)
- A change of heart, for good or ill (Michael Corleone offers to kill Sollozzo and Captain McCluskey)
- An act of depraved violence (Bill Sykes cudgels Nancy)
- Betrayal (Sandy puts a stop to her mentor Jean Brodie)
- Forgiveness (Melanie insists Scarlett join her in the receiving line)
- A revelation (Pip's secret benefactor is none other than ... !)

HCMs can be active, whole scenes:

- A lifesaving attempt
- A chase
- A battle
- A seduction
- A caper

Make a list of Heart-Clutching Moments and put them on index cards in rough order. Then you can build an outline based on any form you desire, be it classical drama, farce or anything in between. If you get stuck, do any of the following:

- Start writing one of your HCM scenes. Immediately the scene itself should prompt ideas, perhaps for new courses of action or even new characters.
- Write deeper into an HCM scene you've written already. You'll likely find yourself coming up with bridges between scenes—and thinking of more elements to enhance your story.
- Look for places to add conflict, suffering or frustration.

For example, Shakespeare wanted to take Macbeth from conquering hero to murderous traitor whose decapitation at the hands of one of his countrymen is the only possible, imaginable end.

How does he do it? Reread the play and you'll realize that one HCM leads to the next, fast and furious: The witches' stunning prophecies, Macbeth's realization that he could be king, his wife's corrupt ambition, one murder, two more murders, and more upon that, and prophesy again, and insanity, and suicide ... all in the space of 98 pages!

SUPERCHARGE YOUR CAST OF CHARACTERS. Readers get hooked on a novel when they meet a character they enjoy spending time with. Characters we love—or love to hate. How do you create them?

LET YOUR READER INSIDE THEIR HEADS. Sure, we see your characters in action, but show us their fears, their misgivings, their secret vanities. Many beginning writers expect the reader to assume too much along these lines. Let us know what your characters are thinking via inner monologues, dialogue or even unexpected action. (*"Yes, dear," he sighed, giving the cat a discreet kick.*)

GIVE A CHARACTER A SECRET. Think *Sophie's Choice*: You can bet William Styron, having thought of the choice first, built the whole novel backward from Sophie's main, huge, character-defining Heart-Clutching Moment. If you bear in mind your character's secret as you write, it will inform your whole novel, lending substance and subtlety.

BUILD IN A LOVABLE QUIRK. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden Caulfield is as cynical as they come—except when something charms him. Pure sincerity pierces his heart, whether it's two nuns in a coffee shop or his naive yet sharp-witted little sister. Without that vulnerability, he'd be just another insufferable teen.

CREATE AN UNPREDICTABLE CHARACTER. Shakespeare's witches, Boo Radley, Kurtz. A character with a screw loose, or one hidden in the shadows, will prevent your readers from ever feeling safe. What will that devil do next?

MAKE THEM SHARE. Do your research and, through your characters, share cool stuff you've learned about a time, place, person or pursuit. *The Day of the Jackal* gives specific, compelling information as to how the assassin works. In his books, retired jockey Dick Francis brings us into horse breeding and racing. Other authors give deep detail on subjects ranging from domestic arts to international terrorism.

END CHAPTERS WITH A BANG.

The most important page turns in any book are those at the ends of the chapters. Why? Because readers tell themselves, “OK, I swear I will turn out the light at the end of this chapter because I am committed to going to yoga at 6:30.”

An alarming 40 percent of readers who put a book down before finishing it never pick it up again. Stuff gets in the way: kids, work, “Columbo” reruns, the J. Crew catalog. So you’ve simply *got* to keep them reading to the end.

As a novice writer, I pondered that admonition. How was I supposed to do it? I couldn’t throw in a car wreck or an assassination or a dangling hero or a miraculous cure at the end of every single chapter; that would be ridiculous. Luckily, the answer came to me in the middle of my first novel, *Holy Hell*: You don’t create Heart-Clutching Moments in order to end a chapter. You end a chapter when you get to a naturally occurring HCM.

More specifically, when you come to a point *just before* or *just after* an HCM, break your chapter. This works every time. Realistically, of course, you don’t have 33 true HCMs in a book; you might have five, or 10. So in the meantime, break chapters at transitions:

- A turning point (where something or someone is about to change)
- A jump in time or place
- A shift in point of view
- A settling of the action
- A ramping-up of the action

These chapter breaks tend to be quieter, but no matter, you must still give your readers a compelling reason to turn that page. It doesn’t have to be big: a pique, a hint, a whiff. More on that next.

USE MOOD LIKE A SCALPEL.

My agent, Cameron McClure, is a demanding reader whose opinions I value. After reading my latest manuscript, she sent me notes, including one concerning the following chapter ending, in which the proprietor of a filling station in the storm-soaked Pacific Northwest is concluding a conversation with a visitor:

First Truck goes off without telling me, now Joey. The gas pump busts, and I’m here selling no gas. No garage work getting done either, I’m sure you notice. Turned away a brake job this morning.

Cameron wrote: “This isn’t a good way to end a chapter—it doesn’t feel over. You do such a good job with chapter endings, and making things feel both wrapped up, yet throwing in some detail or aspect that makes the reader want to read on and know more, that this half-assed chapter ending really sticks out. Can you fix?”

(Side note: As an author, you must develop the necessary dermatological depth to be OK when your own agent calls your work “half-assed.”)

I pondered her request and realized that I could add a feeling of menace and uncertainty. I left everything the way I had it, but added this paragraph to close the chapter with the internal thoughts of the visitor:

When I went out, the moss on the bulletin board looked like it’d grown an inch longer since I’d gone in. The moss, I realized, thrived on the heavy moisture in the air, and the wood that hosted it was decaying because of the same. The wet giveth, and the wet taketh away. Yeah, that was written all over this place.

The day after writing that, I gave a talk in a bookstore about reading and writing mysteries, and I used this as an example of working with an agent—if the agent has good suggestions, you take them. I read the original chapter ending to my audience, then my agent’s criticism of it. Then I read the added paragraph, and listened as they collectively made a soft little “yeah” sound.

STEAL THE STUFF OF GOOD SUSPENSE.

No storyteller invents everything; to be honest, we steal stuff from one another all the time. Joseph Campbell figured it out in *The Power of Myth* and *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, both of which are useful references for any writer. Humankind’s basic stories are always with us: sacrifice and bliss, love and death, adventure and gifts, war and peace. Scratch any good novel and you’ll find one or more seminal myths supporting the story, forming the framework for the characters and the action. And boy, every one of them is a page-turner.

Consider the best-known suspense tale in history, the Adam and Eve story from the Bible. From the moment you hear God tell Adam and Eve, “Whatever you do, don’t eat the fruit from that tree over there,” you know something bad is going to happen. You *know* they’re going to eat the fruit. You know *you* would eat the fruit. And you know how you would feel afterward: guilty. You broke the rules. You know there will be consequences. *Dire* consequences, given the setup.

And you keep reading to find out what happens.

The dudes who wrote the Bible were nobody's fools.

Look back even further, to the story of Pandora, Greek mythology's first woman, who was instructed by Zeus to never, never open that pretty box over there. Once alone with the box, does she just throw it open and scatter its contents?

No! She sits there and thinks about it. She gets up and paces. She agonizes, she wrings her hands, she convinces herself to open it, she convinces herself *not* to open it. She fights with the two sides of her nature: obedience and curiosity.

That myth came to mind when I was working on a chapter about a woman who receives a box from a messenger. The woman is a rich industrialist whose son has gone missing. She has shrugged off a ransom demand, believing her son is trying to trick her. Now, in the middle of a meeting with a private detective about another matter, this box comes, a beer carton sealed with duct tape.

It sits on her mahogany desk like a redneck at a tea party.

I could have made her tear it open, or I could have made the detective snatch it away, or I could have made it explode.

But whatever I was going to do, I sure as heck wasn't going to do it fast. So I made that box sit on her desk while they argued about it.

Is it a joke?

A hoax?

Should we call the bomb squad?

Was I wrong about my son?

How am I going to handle this client if the box contains something potentially devastating?

REMEMBER THAT ACTION IS YOUR ARTILLERY.

Use it strategically. Here are some plans of attack:

LET IT HANG FIRE, OR LET IT GO OFF. Carefully delayed action, as in the example of Pandora's box, works wonders to draw your readers' nerves to the breaking point. But then you must pay it off. Someone barging in with a gun is always alarming, but something as small as a sneeze at an inopportune time can make your readers reach for their heart medicine.

CONSIDER CONSTRUCTING YOUR ENTIRE PLOT AROUND THE BULL'S-EYE OF ACTION. In John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Joads embark on a journey, and immediately the journey itself lends structure, interest and tension: Will they get to California? Will they find work? Will Tom get in trouble again? Where's Rose of Sharon going to give birth: a ditch, a shed, a boxcar? Journeys can be literal or figurative. Of course, the journey plot is just one example of extended action.

LET LOOSE A CANNONADE. Rapid-fire action is handy when you have to have dialogue to reveal information. Instead of sitting two characters on a porch, put them in a fast convertible and make one try to smoke a cigarette while they talk. Make a cop interrupt with a speeding ticket. Make them come upon a crash. Shove the conversation into the interstices of the action.

DEVELOP PLOT BY ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE. If a husband is going to slip and reveal an extramarital affair, make him do it while bringing his wife to climax. If a kid is going to stumble upon a secret, make him do it while chasing his escaped pet lizard.

When reading a good page-turner, analyze it. Ask yourself why it's good, and you'll find any number of these techniques. Then invite your subconscious to come up with some variations of your own.

[This Month's Writing Exercise:](#)

Maybe I'll write. And maybe I won't. Just the opposite of the committed writer, the tentative writer's art can depend on him about as much as an ice skater can depend on April ice. Apply no weight; it may not hold up under even the slightest pressure. Tentative is a difficult place to be. Without passion or commitment, tentative leaves a slightly dissatisfied feeling. Like the kid who goes to the refrigerator, opens the door and stares in. "I want something, I just don't know what." Make a choice. Take a stand. Be certain and bold and reach for those grapes with a greedy hand.

[This Month's Writing Prompt](#)

Write about leaving town.

The Computer Case, Chapter 2!

The Lewiston Writers' Group is proud to present the next chapter of *The Computer Case*, an ongoing work of fiction created by members of our group who were daring enough to try their hand at contributing to a story whose chapters are each written by a different author. Yes, you read that right – each chapter of the story is written by a different member! A special thank-you goes to Robert Kerins, whose creativity and originality got us started on this brand new adventure. Chapter 2, written by Wayne Hilton, follows. Look for a new chapter next month!

The Computer Case

Chapter 2

By Wayne Hilton

I watched as the train receded into the distance. Each second that passed put thousands of people, and an infinite number of possibilities between us. On the taxi drive back to the hotel I prayed there was honesty in the olive green eyes that held my case – and my identity.

“Andy!” Janine stood from her seat and nearly lost her balance as the train rocked sideways. “The case,” She pointed, “you still have his case!”

“It’s got really cool pockets, Mom. See?”

“Oh my God!” Janine reached for where an emergency cord would have been had it been a local – but the cross-state line had no such device. Only the lighted bulbs of the Metro rail map indicating the 13 stops between Gallery Place in downtown D.C. and Rockville, Maryland where Janine and Andy lived. Janine slumped into her seat across from Andy and lost herself in the rhythmic hum of metal wheels turning on the newly replaced carbon steel rails. The Washington suburb receded in the distance as they cleared the rail bridge over Rock Creek and entered Maryland.

I found myself standing near the center of the hotel lobby, lost in the thought of what could happen if I didn’t recover my wallet and other documents. How long do I wait before calling the credit card companies? Before I call to report a lost or possibly stolen passport. Before I call – my supervisor! After seventeen years, at least 200 workshops and seminars, and about as many state-level meetings for my department, how do I tell my boss that her director of Internet Security just handed over his government ID and passport - to a five year old?

Suddenly an intrusive billboard flashed across the back of my mind and jarred me with a single element of hope. Checkbook! Janine wrote a check to pay for the bus tour. I ran for the marble-topped kiosk where the concierge was smiling after a departing guest.

“I need your help. You remember me, don’t you?”

“Of course, Mr. Morse. How can I help you?”

“That woman. The one with the little boy. Janine and Andy. They have my computer case and my passport.”

The concierge reacted with cool precision touching preset numbers on the hotel phone. She held up her index finger gesturing me to wait while she completed the call.

“Detective Taylor? Hello. This is Terri Nelson at the Marriott.”

“No!” I waved my hands in the air trying to cancel her next sentence. “It wasn’t stolen.” I told her in a loud whisper mouthing my words with slow exaggeration. She gently cradled the phone after apologizing to the detective.

“I let the boy carry it – and then he got on a train.”

“I don’t know that there’s anything I can do except to report it to the police, Mr. Morse. I can place that call again for you if you like.”

“The check. Janine wrote a check for the bus tour, remember? I held the bus for them.” I saw the color of her eyes change as if dialing in dioptric magnifiers of scrutiny and suspicion.

“I’m terribly sorry, Mr. Morse. I understand your predicament – but that’s something I can’t do for you.”

I understood. In her years of experience she’d probably heard a lot of whoppers and this one probably ranked up there with the best of them. I had no recourse but to call the police and ask them to look at the check, call the woman, and retrieve my belongings.

I’d paced the lobby, tracing a line along the row of gift shops to the bank of elevators and back again. I was trying to find an alternative that wouldn’t make Janine feel as if I’d branded her a criminal as soon as the train pulled away.

“Mr. Morse?” The concierge had said his name several times before it broke through his thoughts. She waited for him to turn. “There’s a message for you.” She held out a folded sheet of Marriott stationery. Her eyes crinkled at the corners as she smiled.

“I think this may be what you’re looking for.” I glanced at her and opened the note. It read –

Ray, I’m so sorry.

Please call.

Janine Bailey

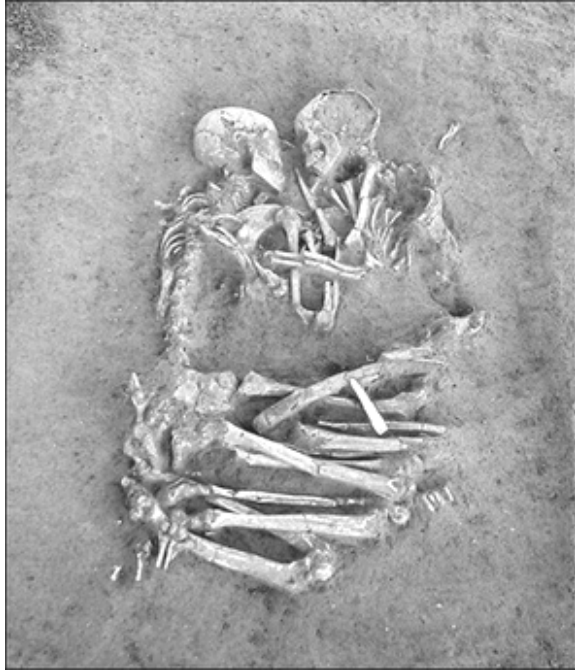
14008 Travilah Road

Rockville, MD 20850

(301)706-1090

...to be continued

Work of Our Members



A pair of human skeletons lie in an eternal embrace at an Neolithic archaeological dig site near Mantova, Italy, in this photo released February 6, 2007. Archaeologists in northern Italy believe the couple was buried 5,000-6,000 years ago, their arms still wrapped around each other in a hug that has lasted millennia. REUTERS/Enrico Pajello/Handout (ITALY). EDITORIAL USE ONLY.

[<http://channel9.msdn.com/ShowPost.aspx?PostID=280114>]

Till Death Do Us Part

Mike Miller

There they are, locked
 In an embrace
 Lasting five millennia
 Loving forever more

Dying together
 Each in the other's arms
 Adds meaning to their love
 Till death do us part
 How profound, in today's cultures

Doomed love
 Or expressed love

Unambiguous love
 Security failed, caring prevailed

Petrified embrace
 Accepting the inevitable
 Reaching out to each other
 Transcending the known

Valentines Day

(Copyright © 2010, Michael H Miller)

Words in this word search may be left, right, up, down, diagonal, wrap.

Wrap words exit one side and re-enter on the other side. For example, note the word "sense", underlined, exits the bottom, reenters at the top.

```

f h l n o s o v e e o c e
s c m n s m t a l k u a
g u h e g s h a r e p s
w o r r a s t k r e i e
e t w s r e p o t l d h
h a e w d r m a b i i r
l o r h e a r t s m i g
h c l d n c s e s s i k
h t g c a n d l e l i g
o r e d i u g d n o l o
n d y i u n e o s s d c a
    
```

- - - - -
 - - - - -

arrow
 bliss
 candle light
 candy
 caress
 chocolate
 cupid
 desire
 dessert
 dinner
 fall
 garden
 guide
 hearts
 hugs
 kisses
 moon light
 passion
 romance
 sense
 share
 smile
 star light
 talk
 touch

Valentine's Day

By John S. Bis

The sight was beautiful but also bordering on terrifying. It was also colder and windier than he had expected up there. He thought he had been prepared but his hands, tightly grasping the steel platform railing, were getting numb even with gloves. He had tried putting his hands in the pockets of his jacket but letting go of the railing unnerved him. He felt himself begin to sway and edge over the low railing. That was not yet what he wanted so he alternated his hands, one on the railing, one in a pocket.

Suddenly he was aware of someone below him coming nearer. He looked down the long narrow ladder. Someone was resolutely climbing, pausing to catch their breath, and climbing again. He knew the effort. It had taken him a half hour to climb up to this platform.

When he looked directly downward he felt a wave of dizziness. The crowd of people in the Channel 3 parking lot were milling around, many of them looking up. He found it interesting that the emergency lights from the police and fire vehicles didn't shine up toward him. But, after all, that made sense, didn't it? They were earthly machines, focused upon ground level activities. He gripped the railing to steady himself against the blur in his vision as he leaned into the ladder opening.

"Hey, you climbing up! Please stop! Don't come any higher."

He watched as the climber paused, but then resumed the climb. He wasn't sure if the climber didn't hear him because of the wind or was deliberately ignoring his plea.

He moved away from the ladder opening in the platform floor where the ladder entered. Both hands gripped the railing again and he turned and looked out over the western side of the city. It was a wonderful view from up here. He could see the lengthening shadows of buildings as the sun moved closer toward its setting. How beautiful everything looks, he thought. It's a shame that everything can't be this enjoyable, that she couldn't understand how wonderful their life could be.

"Hello up there, I'm coming up!"

He was started by the shout, and when he turned around he saw the climber on the ladder was close enough so that his head appeared above the floor grate.

"Go away! Please go back down!" he shouted.

"I can't go down just yet. I'm exhausted from the climb. I need to rest. Just let me get up enough to sit on the platform."

"No! If you come any closer I'm going to fly away."

"Son, listen to me. I just want to talk and I won't interfere with you. I really need to rest. You know it's a tough climb."

His hands were tightly gripping the railing. He was half turned so he could see the head talking to him. As he watched the head was joined first by two arms, then shoulders.

Then the climber said, "My arms and legs need a rest. If I don't rest I'm afraid I might lose my grip and fall. You wouldn't want that to happen would you?"

He was beside himself. He knew he wasn't ready yet. He would be soon, but not just yet. He said to the climber,

"OK. OK! You can sit on the edge of the platform but keep your legs dangling. If you try to stand up I will fly. I will!"

"OK son."

The climber got himself above the platform and eased himself off the ladder into a sitting position, letting his legs dangle into the 200 feet of air below him. He was careful to sit on the side of the floor opening so he didn't have his back to the boy.

"Thanks. I really am tired from that climb. For a while I wasn't sure I'd make it. My name's Matt, what's yours?"

"Never mind! Just sit there and be quiet. I'll give you 10 minutes then you go back down."

"OK, but tell me, uh, why are you up here? Do you have some problem with Channel 3?"

As he said this the climber slowly adjusted his sitting position, inching backward until the edge of the platform was against the back of his knees.

"Channel 3, you mean the television station down there?"

"Yeah, this is their tower. Why are you up here?"

He warily watched the climber. He didn't want to talk, he wanted to be alone. This was supposed to be his time for reflection. In an annoyed tone he said, "This has nothing to do with Channel 3 or this tower. It was just convenient for today, that's all. Today is what's important."

The climber was speaking in a softer tone now, loud enough to be heard but trying to convey some sense of understanding.

"What about today? Today is a Wednesday in the middle of February. Why is it so important?"

Still annoyed he yelled, "I told her she'd get a big surprise today. A surprise she'll never forget."

"Surprises are good," the climber said. He started moving now in a motion of massaging his thighs and upper arms. "Does she like surprises? Is she a girlfriend of yours?"

He started to reply, then paused and shook his head. He took his eyes off the climber, and looked toward the western sky. The sun was beginning to shape into a big orange. His vision momentarily blurred as he glanced into the sun. He smiled as he imagined a giant 'Sunkist' stamped across its face.

The climber reacted as best he could from his sitting position. He was able to stretch out and grab the boy by the right ankle and pull him down. Whether it was deliberate or simply a response to the fall, the boy's other foot caught the climber right in the face. His grip on the boy loosened. The climber, now stretching across the platform, tried to grab the boy's left foot with his other hand but the boy's shoe came off.

"You lied! You're spoiling everything!" the boy screamed. He crabbed his way backward.

"Don't do this," the climber yelled. "You have your whole life, a life for many surprises."

The climber still had a grip on a leg of the boy's jeans but, as he kicked and crabbed backward the grip loosened.

"You ruined everything! You did, you did!" The boy, tears gushing, grabbed the lower rail and thrust himself

backward, kicking free of the climber.

Then he was gone.

A full two minutes went by before the climber felt able to stand up and look down toward the parking lot. He reached for the squawking radio on his belt.

The radio voice asked, "Matt, are you OK?"

"Yeah, George, I'm OK. I almost had him, damn it, I almost did. God, what a damned waste."

"Matt, you tried, hell just going up there took a lot of courage. I couldn't have done that. Be careful coming down. You need any help?"

"No, I'm OK. The kid was hyped about some thing, maybe he was high, I dunno, I couldn't tell. He was focused on today and a surprise for some girl."

"You tried Matt, nothing anybody can do now. The kid was 19 according to his driver's license, maybe he was in love. Maybe it had to do with today being Valentine's Day."

"How do you mean, George, What did he think he was doing, sending this girl a valentine?"

"Yea, Matt. Sending a valentine, that's who he was, Valentine DiGeorgio."

[Links for Writers](#)

NEW www.absolutewrite.com
www.freelancewriting.com
www.glimmertrain.com
www.firstwriter.com
www.writersdigest.com
www.writersjournal.com

[Lewiston Public Library](#)

305 South Eighth Street, Lewiston, NY 14092
Voice: (716) 754-4720
FAX: (716) 754-7386
www.LewistonPublicLibrary.org

[Contact Information](#)

If you would like more information regarding the Lewiston Writers' Group, please contact Debra Sherman at 754-8408 or email DLSHERMAN1@yahoo.com.

Soul Speak

By Debra Sherman

He seemed to me familiar, even though at first unknown.
Quite common on the surface, not quite lonely, yet alone.

I felt a forceful stirring, yet I didn't know just why.
I liked him, yes, but didn't have a clue, "this was the guy."

He waited very patiently, hoping to catch my eye.
I turned him down so many times, yet I never heard his sigh.

Six years pass and suddenly, I find myself alone.
Finally I reach for him, and I'm amazed by what I'm shown.

What I saw was not a simple, quiet sort of man.
Instead a complex soul emerged, quite hard to understand.

Outside he is raging, with the pounding of his hands.
It seems there's no frustration equal to this man's.

It's like his soul is screaming, so unsettled in this mess.
It knows what it is needing, and without that, it can't rest.

Inside, it is clear to me, is a person made un-whole.
A man who feels defeated, an aching, sweet, sweet soul.

My purpose is quite clear to me, and matches my desire.
I only want to help him, to pull him from the fire.

He hesitates to take my hand, skittish to say the least.
But wouldn't any one of us be, in the wake of past defeat?

He'll trust me only slightly, 'comes near me, then withdraws.
He wants his hands upon me, but fears I'll snap one in my jaws.

Perhaps he thinks of fleeing, "Forget her, they're all the same."
Yet something holds him to me, makes him want to play this game.

What he doesn't know is I'm meant for him, and he is meant for me.
Our worlds have come together, and we make the perfect "we."

He doesn't know I've waited twenty years to see his face.
He's the man I've always wanted, like a soul mate I misplaced.

He doesn't know the power of what I clearly see.
The strength of my soul "knowing" and pulling him to me.

There is a lack, a nagging, whose source he still can't see.
It is my soul whispering in his ear, "What you're lacking, Dear, is *me*."

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please unsubscribe by sending an email request to DLSHERMAN1@yahoo.com