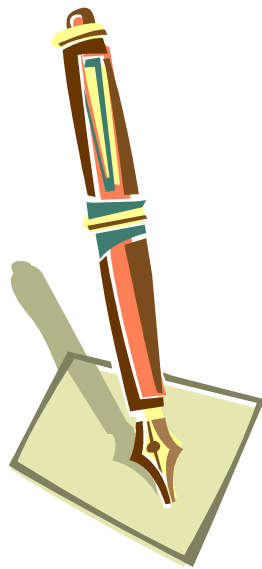


Writing Anthology



*Camden County
Arts 4 Teens Festival
2006*

Matt Pellegrino
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

I **am** alone.
I stand in the dense jungle undergrowth, contemplating my status.
I have been abandoned.
The others have deserted me.
Why?
Why has this happened to me?
I cannot remember anything leading up to this.
All I know, with utmost certainty, is that I have been abandoned.

I begin exploring this jungle prison, as if to **find** the answers to my questions in the exotic
plant growth.
Soon I reach the mouth of a cave.
It is not a cave of darkness and despair, but a cave of brightness and contentment.
I don't understand why, but I **am** attracted towards this cave.
It is **as** if a voice is calling my name, a name that I don't even remember belonging to.
The cave is good.
I take three steps into it and the ground gives way.
As I fall, the one thought that continues to go through my mind is
Why did the cave do this to me?
I still believed that the cave was good, but I could not fathom this apparent treachery.
I **am** utterly confused.
My **confusion** is so intense, that I black out for the next few minutes.

When I stir back into consciousness, I realize that I am in a large underground tunnel.
Everything is dark except for a tremendous light at the far end.
All at once, my confusion disappears.
I have the answers, not the answers I had wanted, but the answers I needed.
Now I know the voice that called me, the source of the cave's positive energy.
The cave did not betray me.
In abandoning me, the others had saved me.
I stand, making my way to the light.
I **am** no longer alone.

Mother Knows Best:

I'm talking and thinking and yelling out loud
I'm lost and need the fastest way out
Something it seems has gone **horribly** wrong
I was getting ready to be wed **and-**
Is that a song?
I'm hearing such a beautiful sound
I don't know where, but it's floating around
I'm running through halls and walls start to blend
But then I see the door where my running ends
DOOM! DOOM!
The first thing I ~~think~~ of as I see the locked room
I jiggle the handle, the door will not budge
Is the woman inside holding a grudge?
I pound on the door, the splinters sting
And all of a sudden I hear a ring
RING! RING! I look for the call
But the ringing has stopped so I turn to **the-** wall.
A wall? How so? Where has the room gone?
With the woman inside singing such lovely songs
I need to find her and ask where I am?
Times running out and this realm be damned
I refuse to stay in this ridiculous place
Where all I can see are walls **and-** lace.
Lace? Oh my! How lovely to see
Did the woman leave it when running from me
It's beautifully stitched with pinks and blues
And the ribbons were placed with all types of glue
BANG! BANG! My what a sound
That banging and clanging that shakes the ground
I must find out where that's coming from
Maybe it's that woman with the **lovely-** hum?
Humming? Oh my! What a sweet tune
It seems to remind me of someone, but whom?
I follow the hum down many a floor
And I'm shocked to find that missing door
An odd looking door with blood on the rims
Surely inside it might hold something **grim**
And here I notice the door is ajar
I must go inside, but must stand my guard
Oh my! Oh my! Such a lovely scene
Such lavish curtains and warm smelling tea
It's just a small room, quite cozy in fact
Except for some dust the room's quite in tact
And I see the woman, she's quite out of place
With blood dried hair and a deformed face
I ask with a stutter, "What is your name?"
She said, "Think of yours, it's exactly the same"
I blinked my eyes and turned pale
"What is my name?" I said with a wail
She turned away out of shame
"Your name is Bonnie, mine is the same"
"How did you know that?" I said with fear
"Cause I **am** the one who named you that, dear"
Was she insane? She must have been
My mother was a goddess, this "thing" reeks sin
"Excuse me" I start, "But I must disagree."
My mum, God rest her soul, had given it to me"
"What was your mother's name?" She asked with a smile
"Bonnie" I answer, then stand shocked for a while
Oh no, it's impossible, it has to be a trick

My mother had died when I was just six
That's not my mum, she had golden skin
This woman **looks** like she's made out of tin
That's not my mum, she had sparkling blue eyes
This woman's eyes are as black as the night
That's NOT my mum, she had gorgeous blonde waves
This woman looks like she crawled from the grave
I back away slowly while shaking my head
"You're not my mum, she's gone and dead"
"Oh my darling" she said with woe
"I am your mother, my little Boe"
Boe? **BOE?** How did she know?
That's what my mum called me, her little Boe...
"How do you know me?" I'm starting to shake
The anger inside will surely break
"Oh my dear, do you know how I died?
You had just turned six, on the 12th of July....

28 years ago...

It was a beautiful day on Creasant Drive
Humming birds filled the morning sky
However there was a more beautiful sound
The sound of a mother's song was floating around
"No one **can** take you away **from** me dear
No **matter** what **I'll** always be here
Though some day we'll be apart
Remember that I will be in your-
RING! RING!
The sound of the bell made Boe jump with a start
"**Shh**" said her mother, then finished her "heart...."
"I'll be right back darling" her mother sang out the door
"Okay" Boe said while playing with dolls on the floor
BANG! BANG!
Boe jumped in **fright**
"Mummy" she cried "Are you alright?"
There was no answer and Boe's tears increased
"Mama! **Mama!** Answer me please!"
She quietly started to go down the hall
And kept herself against the **wall**.
"Mama?" she whispered as she went down the stairs
Every creak and crack made her more scared
And then she saw a sight that made her want to **run**
Her mother lie on a door in a pool of blood
"Don't bloody move" she heard a man's voice
"Don't **turn** around, it's not a choice"
Boe could hardly hear what the murderer said
She was staring at her mother and her lopsided head
Her mother's face used to be porcelain, like a doll
But now it looks like she was carved with a saw
"How could you?" she whispered through her tears
"Bonnie had it **coming after** all these years"
A siren was heading towards the house
And the man ran away like a frightened mouse.
Boe ran to her mum and hoped she would wake
"**MAMA!! DONT LEAVE!! IT'S NOT TOO LATE!!**"
Her mother opened her now blank eyes
And started to sing to **Boe's** surprise
"Though some day we'll be apart
Remember that I will be in your heart"
Her voice **faded** out and **Boe** was startled and jumped
No longer could she feel the thump, thump, thump...
Boe stared in silence as the police came in

They took in the scene, and got ready to begin...
They found the murderer that took **Boe's** mum away
It was **an** ex-lover that beat her for play
He took out his crowbar and she closed the door fast
But he broke the door down and began his attack
Boe had to stay in foster care
For she had no family anywhere
She went to the funeral and the tears came on
And as she **stood** there, she sang a song
"No one can take you away **from** me dear
No matter what, I'll always be here
Though someday we will be apart
Remember that I will be in your heart"
With that she looked at the setting sun
And **turned** from the grave with a "**goodnight** mum"

Present...

I stood there shocked, is this true?
"The day I blocked out is coming **from** you?"
"Of **course** it is dear, now please don't run.
You are my daughter and I am your mum."
It has to be true, how would she know
The day I blocked out to ease my own soul?
And now amazement washed over me
"Mummy you're here? How can this be?"
"Yes, I'm here, been for quite some time..
I wanted to live here," she quietly replied
"You remember this place, it was our home,
The only one I've ever known"
And as I look around, I realize she's right
It was my old room upstairs that we played in at times
I glance at my mum who hasn't aged
Except for the cobwebs she still looks the same
"I've missed you my dear," my mum said with a smile
"I've been trying to reach you for quite a while"
"Why did you want me to come to this place?"
"I wanted to see you before your big day"
My big day? How did she know?
"Oh my I should have been there hours ago!"
My sweet Ernest has waited so long
I hope he doesn't think I've run and gone
"Don't **worry** dear they won't ever know,
Now I must say my peace before you go"
What does she mean they won't **know** I'm gone
I have been gone for oh so long
And how does she know what my mind says
I would dwell further but she's speaking again
"I have to warn you about what's to come.
A gruesome fright", said my now shaking mum
And she runs to me in a deathly blur
"An awful fate is about to occur!"
What does she mean? An awful fate?
What's going on that has her in that a state?
"When you return you'll see the horrid mess
Of all the blood stains on your wedding dress
And you'll see the satisfied face
Of your good old friend Anna Grace
I'm shocked...bewildered...**scared** and unsure
However the rage that I feel is more pure
"How dare you!?" I scream "Why do you lie?"
"I'm not lying," she quietly replied
I started to panic in a **frantic** way

Trying to assess the issue at bay
Ty to stay calm, keep the anger down
I'll just have her explain what she's talking about
"Why would you think Anna will kill me?
We've been best friends since the age of thirteen."
My mother looked at me and talked real slow
"First of all, I don't think she will, I know."
And with her serious face I start to believe
But I know, deep down, I'm just being naive
"Listen my dear, she's jealous of you.
She's in love with the man you love too.
She thought he loved her when they **f**irst met
Contrary to her thoughts, he loved you instead.
And since then she has wanted revenge
And she won't stop until your dead."
This is not right! It couldn't be!
Anna loves Ernest, and wants to kill me?
This is surreal, I'm going insane
I'm talking to my dead mother for goodness sakes!!
This place in itself...it seems like a dream
Some haunting dream that's troubling my sleep
I have to wake up! I must be away!
Far, far away ~~from~~ this wicked place
"Oh Bonnie, my love, you don't believe
You must however, try to, please!
You don't understand that when you leave
You'll die a death so gruesome, yet not brief.
Listen to me or you'll be stabbed in the back
Both mentally and physically I happen to add.
I know how to stop your troubling fate!
Move away from the **m**irror when you awake."
When I awake? So it is a dream
I knew it all along! My, I'm relieved
I know what she's saying is nothing but lies
I'm just having nerves as any normal bride
"Excuse me, "mother," but I must go be wed."
Then I said sarcastically, "Before I'm dead."
Then this woman who looked so distorted and drained
Started to sob and looked at me pained
"You don't believe me, and it's troubling me so,
If you want to live happily, please believe my sweet Boe!"
And I want to so badly, she seems so sincere
But this is all just pretend, I'm not really here
I start to back against the door
"Tell me how to leave," I began to implore
She looked at me then, let out a sigh
She looked so defeated, and again she cried
Then I hear, "Just walk out the door,
And you'll be where you were before."
"Thank You," I say as I start to go
"Goodbye my Bonnie, my darling Boe."
But then I didn't hear her as I **l**eft the room
When she quietly whispered, "See you soon."

Trying to assess the issue at bay
Try to stay calm, keep the anger down
I'll just have her explain what she's talking about
"Why would you think **Anna** will kill me?
We've been best friends since the age of thirteen."
My mother looked at me and talked real slow
"First of all, I don't think she will, I know."
And with her serious face I start to believe
But I know, deep down, I'm just being naive
"Listen my dear, she's jealous of you.
She's in love with the man you love too.
She thought he loved her when they **first** met
Contrary to her thoughts, he loved you instead.
And since then she has wanted revenge
And she won't stop until your dead."
This is not right! It couldn't be!
Anna loves Ernest, and wants to kill me?
This is surreal, I'm going insane
I'm talking to my dead mother for goodness sakes!!
This place in itself...it seems like a dream
Some haunting **dream** that's troubling my sleep
I have to wake up! I must be away!
Far, far away ~~from~~ this wicked place
"Oh **Bonnie**, my love, you don't believe
You must however, try to, please!
You don't understand that when you leave
You'll die a death so gruesome, yet not brief.
Listen to me or you'll be stabbed in the back
Both mentally and physically I happen to add.
I know how to stop your troubling fate!
Move away from the **mirror** when you awake."
When I awake? So it is a dream
I knew it all along! My, I'm relieved
I know what she's saying is nothing but lies
I'm just having nerves as any normal bride
"Excuse me, "mother," but I must go be wed."
Then I said sarcastically, "Before I'm dead."
Then this woman who looked so distorted and drained
Started to sob and looked at me pained
"You don't believe me, and it's troubling me so,
If you want to live happily, please believe my sweet Boe!"
And I want to so badly, she seems so sincere
But this is all just pretend, I'm not really here
I start to back against the door
"Tell me how to leave," I began to implore
She looked at me then, let out a sigh
She looked so defeated, and again she cried
Then I hear, "Just walk out the door,
And you'll be where you were before."
"Thank You," I say as I start to go
"**Goodbye** my Bonnie, my darling Boe."
But then I didn't hear her as I **left** the room
When she quietly whispered, "See you soon."

Dance

Music Playing
Faces fading
Worries gone
There's only the song
My body starts to move
While the music sets the mood
Pique, Arabask, Shacee, Tour Jete
In my head the words I say
Combinations keep repeating
To the other side of the stage I am fleeing
From the front the judges watch
Looking for every mistake and botch
My nervousness I'm slowly losing
Forgetting fear of steps that are confusing
The music finally ends
The crowd claps as I curtsy and bend

Chiawei Leu
Mrs. Konigsberg
English

The Third Grade Prodigy

"Quiet down, children."

There it was; old Mrs. Strauss' tinny voice telling us to be quiet.

"Today, we are going to have a quiz. Isn't that exciting?"

Of course, Mrs. Strauss, I love taking quizzes just as much as I love seeing your crinkly face every morning.

"Now, everyone, flip the paper on your desk over. You have 20 minutes. Begin!"

Oh, boy! This should be easy enough. I immediately looked around me for some smart kids. The kid in front of me was already done the first couple questions. The fools to my left and right, however, weren't doing so hot. They were having enough trouble just spelling out their names. So, I decided the kid in front of me would do.

"Psst! Hey kid, what's the answer to number 1?" I whispered.

"I'm not telling you! Do your own work" he whispered back.

He had a high and weak kind of voice. Boy, did he sound like a wimp.

"Hey, I said 'what's the answer to number 1?'" I said again, this time louder.

"Gosh...ok. It's "IMADOOFUS"!"

Yes! Score one. I immediately wrote it down. Just as a precaution, I decided to check it by reading the question:

$$\begin{array}{r} 26 \\ + 4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

The answer didn't seem right. How can you add numbers together and end up with letters? Well, maybe it was some advanced algetry or even caculatrus. I heard my big brother telling me about it once. He was 13 and he is now sitting about three rows away from me. **Anyway**, I thought that for such an advanced answer, I was sure to get extra credit.

The kid in front of me then turned around to face me.

"You know I was just joshing you, right? The real answer is "CAT"."

Boy, did this irk me. First not giving me the answers, and then giving me the wrong ones!

"Kid, you better not give me the wrong answers anymore or else your face is going to get joshed. Now, what are the answers to the rest of the test?" I snapped.

And with that, he told me the rest of the answers. Most of them were easy enough. As for the ones that he didn't know, I figured them out with ease. For example, I had a question like:

If you had two apples, and I gave you two oranges, how many apples would you have? _____

Well, obviously, since I don't like apples, I would have thrown them away, hence leaving me with no apples. What a no-brainer.

"Five minutes, left children" sang Mrs. Strauss

Yeah, like I would need those. I looked around me. I was the only one done. This was the easiest quiz I ever took. All of the other third graders were still scribbling away their pencils dwindling as I relaxed at my desk. Even the fourth, fifth, and sixth graders were still wasting their time on their hopeless answers.

"Ok children. Time's up. Now please bring your papers to my desk and place them in their corresponding grade box.

At the moment I heard Mrs. Strauss' voice, I jumped up **from** my desk and placed it in the box marked "Third Grade". I already knew that my quiz didn't need to be graded because I already knew I had gotten 100, but I decided to hand mine in first, so when Mrs. Strauss was done grading my class, I would get mine back first. **Hopefully**, she would use my quiz as an example to the other nincompoops around me on how to do advanced algemetry or caculatrus, whichever one I did.

As I waited for the rest of my fellow third graders to put their quizzes in the box, I noticed that the kid who helped me did not put his quiz in the third grade box, but instead, put it in the second grade box. **Haha**, the fool. He would of course get all of his answers wrong. Tough luck.

As I made my way back to my desk, I just 'happened' to meet up with him.

"So, how did you think you did?"

And before he could answer, I said again,

"Because I think you failed your test. I was going to say something, but I thought the less competition there was in this class, the better. You put your quiz in the wrong box. You were supposed to put yours in the third grade box, not the second grade one"

I stood there, looking at him as smug as I could. Then, with a smile on his face, he replied serenely to me,

"You know, you're absolutely right. The less competition in this class is better. But there is one problem."

He paused, looking at me as though he had just won a lifetime supply of gummy bears.

"I'm not in your class"

And with that, he walked away from me, leaving me behind, looking at him dumbfounded and thunder stricken.

Noel Vadino
Our Lady of Mount Carmel

A Miner's Worst Fear

A poem dedicated to the miners who died in January 2006

The early morning nineteen men were out to mine
Digging for minerals, they thought everything was fine
They worked on their hand and knees, scattered on the ground
Chiseling the rocks and mines that were all around
Sago Mine is where this adventure took place
Until hours later this big job was a disgrace
As the men **scurried** together in fear
An explosion in **front** of them appeared
Scared, lost, and black as night
They thought of their loved ones, family, and the people in sight
Regretting to come from this dangerous blast,
they wanted to come home

Six then escaped, thirteen miners were left alone
People heard the news, they cried and mourned
Wanting to see their beloved miners, their hearts were torn
We wanted a miracle, we prayed everyday
Our miners worked hard
it would be horrible to die this way

Hours went by, news spurred the nation
People were crushed of the devastating situation
Even though twelve passed away and one is still here
It's hard to be happy, it's a matter of tears

We know they were strong, brave, and fearless
They are types of heroes, the ones we will miss
In remembrance of them we give love
And hopefully meet these angels up above