



Midnight Fiction !!

By

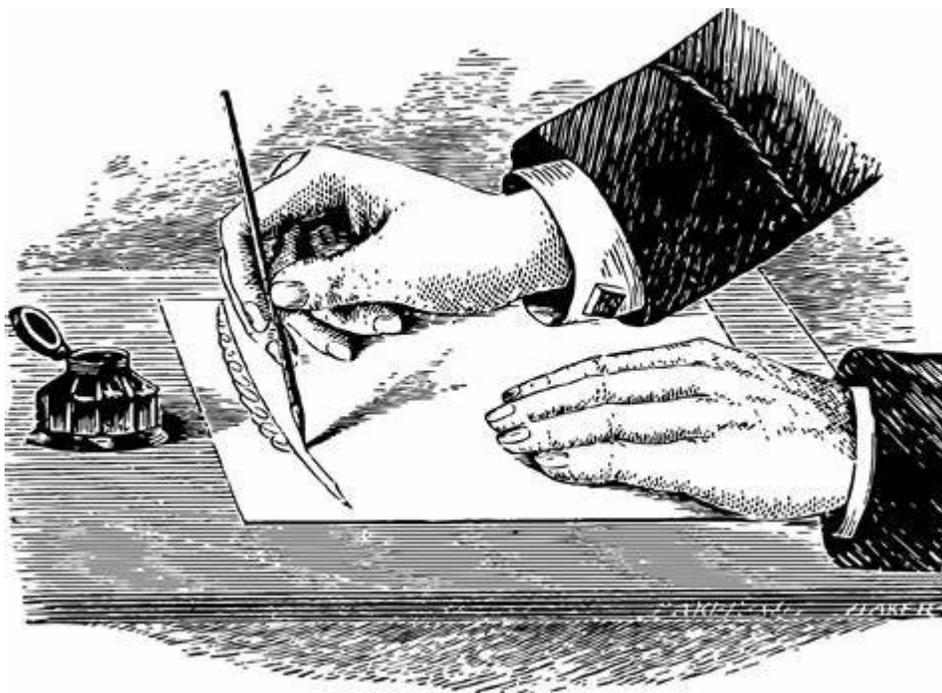
Joey Scarfone, Contributing Editor
(after midnight it's all lies)

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR'S NOTE:

It has come to my attention that there is some confusion over the mission statement of this column. Let me be very clear.....our goal is nothing less than to distort the rules of the space-

time continuum....in a progressive, entertaining, literary demolition derby kind of way. Will there be a price to pay? Yes, there always is, but I assure you it will be far less than what your next dentist appointment is going to cost. To fully appreciate the depth and complexity of this column think..... Monty Python meets Leonard Cohen at a bus stop on Vancouver Island.

I have added a new section at the end of this column called Gems In The Rough. They are rough drafts for short stories I have written (and I mean rough). Some would make good stories for movies.....I think. They are too long to include in this column so if you are interested in reading them, or making a movie that would make us all rich, contact me and I would be happy to email them to you (jscar@shaw.ca). Like I said....they are rough drafts so don't worry about punctuation, spelling or other grammatical speed bumps that only hinder the meter of the story.



LETTERS TO THE CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Hy Joey

My friends and I have been enjoying every issue of FOTD but when issue 12 came out with your column we were blown away. You see, we have a small cultish group of literary misfits who enjoy literature that isn't mainstream. We call ourselves "the desperate dogs" after one of your poems. Your rag....I mean.....mag, fits our tastes perfectly. When I describe FOTD to other people I tell them it's like a meteor shower every 4 months only it's not meteors it's more like space debris. Keep up the good work and we'll be looking forward to your next issue.

Freddy and the desperate dogs (New York City)

MY REPLY

Hy Freddy and the desperate dogs. That would make a good name for a band. Thanks for the words of support. It's cool to have your own cult but don't start sacrificing goats or anything like that. There is no great deity good or bad hanging over this group of writers. If there was a way to appease the gods so life would get easier for us believe me, we would and I would gladly volunteer my services as the high priest.

Cheers.....joey

Hy Joey

I am a sun worshipper and suffer from mild depression when the warm weather goes away. Reading Midnight Fiction always picks my spirits up but my body still aches when the cold weather hits. Do you think you will be publishing columns more than three times a year?

Dorothy Daylight (White Horse NWT)

MY REPLY

Hello Dorothy. Several other magazines have been trying to seduce me with promises of syndication and offering to pay me twice as much as FOTD. In short.....I can help with your problems though. It sounds like you have SAAAPS (seasonally adjusted aches and pains syndrome). I suffer from the same affliction. I'm hoping that a magazine based in the Caribbean makes me an offer I can't refuse. St. Lucia mud baths here I come. Until then keep worshipping the sun.

Hy Joey

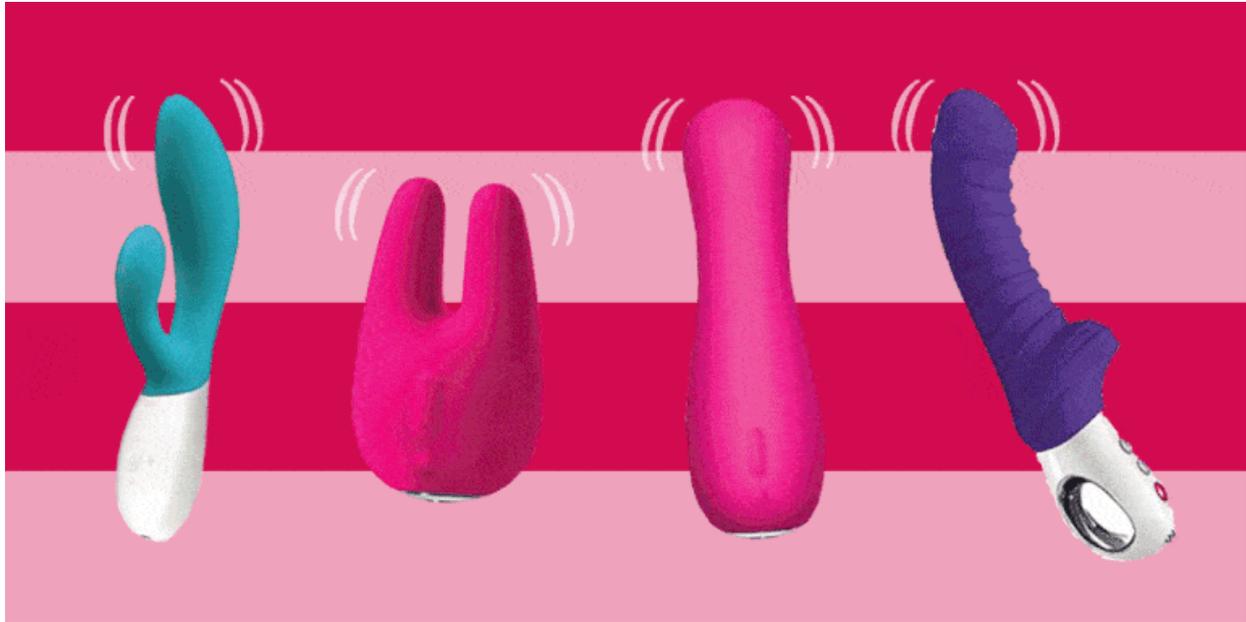
I am a first year English student at the University of Victoria. I was wondering if you could shed some light on a problem I am unable to solve.....My question is.....when does a short story become a long story?

Page Turner

MY REPLY

That is a very good question Page and one that has been puzzling me for years. I have done some research on it and I will share my thoughts with you. One would think it is merely a word count but that would be too simple. Let's look first at a short novel also known as a novella. The same question arises....when does a novella become a novel? It's kind of like that old philosophy trick....to get across the room you have to first go half way, and half way again and again so theoretically you can never cross the damn room. But now we are into the real of quantum physics and that's definitely out of my depth. Soooo, I'm thinking of making a contest out of this. I'll make this a contest and put your question out to our readers and whoever sends in the best

answer wins half of the money I collect from the contest entry fees. I've noticed this is how it works in mainstream literary contests. Hey....we all gotta' make a buck!



LOVER'S LANE with Dr. LINDA LOVELESS Phd.

Dear Dr. Loveless

My husband really loves pizza. In fact, it is an aphrodisiac for him. We order large pizzas five times a week and it never fails.....we end up in bed after supper having sex. This has been going on for a year now and although our sex life is great we have both put on 35 pounds. Is there any way to keep the sex happening without changing our diet?

Dear take out

If you are having sex five times a week that is far above the national average for married couples. You don't want to decrease the frequency but maybe you could order smaller sized vegetarian pizza's with a side salad and fewer toppings. Also, try weaning yourself off pizza and look for a substitute like

calzones. If that doesn't work then just learn to be happy with who you are. Believe me, if pizza could solve every married couples' problems I would be out of business!

Dear Dr. Loveless

My husband and I have been having marital problems. We are both psychologists and it was an argument just to decide who we should go see for counselling. We finally decided to see a female psychologist. This started out fine but my husband and her were attracted to each other. The next thing you know, they are running off to Mexico together leaving me holding the bag. I consider myself an intelligent person but can't make any sense out of all this. It is quite bewildering.

Dear bewildered

Wow! This is really one for the books. Coming from an academic background you are over thinking everything. I suggest you start watching golf. It is mindless. The broadcaster tells you everything...nine iron.....150 yards from the hole.....slight westerly wind etc. After you get tired of this take up a hobby that doesn't require a learning process like bird watching. The less you analyze everything the happier you will be.

Dear Dr. Loveless

My wife and I both love black coffee. I mean....we reeeeeeealy love coffee. It is our one and only drug. We drink about 10 cups each every day. The thing is....we don't sleep very much and when we are awake in bed we just have sex and then drink more coffee. We both work from home so that doesn't help the problem. We have a three gallon coffee machine and the habit is getting quite expensive plus, it would be nice to get a little sleep now and then. What can we do?

Dear sleepless

Researches have found that some Brazilian jungle tribes use coffee to stay alert while hunting. They have shown that after consuming large amounts of caffeine it is possible to hear and see things that a normal person can not.....some call it hallucinating. If the pictures on your walls start talking to you I suggest you cut back on the java. On the other hand, you can get a lot done if you don't sleep for three days. Perhaps adding milk and cutting out the sugar might also keep you a little more grounded.

Dear Dr. Loveless

My wife and I own a Mexican restaurant. For five years it has been good but she got tired of the routine and ran off with a sushi chef from a neighbouring Japanese restaurant. I really want her back and I'm willing to do anything. Please help me.

Dear cookie

I would suggest adding sunamono salad and California rolls to your Mexican menu. She should come running back to you with open arms....but if she doesn't....start thinking outside the burrito.



World famous eco-warrior and multi millionaire David Suzuki has decided to start a school for people who want to pursue a career as environmentalists. Students will learn how to make money in this field and also how to create their own foundation when they get too much of it. Tax shelters are the key says David. Upon graduation students will receive a pair of hiking boots, a back pack and a water proof tent signed by Mr. Suzuki. Saving the planet must be everyone's first priority says the Vancouver resident so I am making tuitions affordable. David goes on to say that a cost of only \$10,000.00 per semester we will attract the cream of the crop and guarantee the long term survival of the school as well as the planet of course. Sign me up David I just happen to have \$10,000.00 burning a hole in my jeans. West coast trail here I come.....

Hockey personality Don Cherry hasn't been in the news much since his show Coach's Hernia was cancelled because of a racial slur he made. However, it's hard to keep this pit bull tied up. According to a rumour started here at Midnight Fiction Don is now working as a greeter at Walmart. Says Don.....I don't need the money I just do it because I love people. Atta boy Don.....you're still in the game.....

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has taken another drastic measure to save trees. From now on sale or distribution of toothpicks will be outlawed. His cabinet has informed him that the banning of plastic bags in food stores has created a surplus of plastic which can be used to produce tooth picks. Paper bags are now being used to package groceries but it remains to be seen if the tree count will go up or down. Says Justin.....my government is being pro-active when it comes to saving the environment.....more people should be flossing anyway.

Three intruders disguised as the three wise men were apprehended by security guards at the Christmas eve nativity ceremony in the Vatican. As it turns out they were none other than Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Mark Zuckerberg. They were carrying small brief cases with blank cheques. When questioned they said they came to buy the Vatican. Pope Francis immediately gave a statement saying that the Vatican was not and never will be for sale. Midnight Fiction has sent our foreign correspondent Jimmy “jetlag” Ferguson to conduct an exclusive interview with Pope Francis to clarify the situation.....

Jimmy: Hello your eminence. Thanks for the interview. This situation is causing quite a stir around the world. How is the Catholic church handling it?

Pope Francis: We have never had anyone approach us so indiscreetly about any real estate transactions. The church could never find another place to store all our artwork and the tourist dollars from Vatican city barely cover the operating costs.

Jimmy: Did you talk to the three “wise men” personally?

Pope Francis: I did. Their offer was very tempting. They told me I could fill out the checks for any amount I wanted to. I must admit it was tempting but when I found out what their plans for the Vatican were I flatly refused.

Jimmy: And what were their plans?

Pope Francis: They were going to turn it into their global control central office, something like what it is now for the church. That was understandable but they were also going to convert it to an amusement centre like Disney Land. They said the church wasn't getting the maximum tourist value and their plan would quadruple the revenues.

Jimmy: I see. 'Sounds like another sinister plot to rule the world by three power junkies.

Pope Francis: Exactly. Let's get something straight.....the church has been ruling most of the free world for hundreds of years and we are not going to be outdone by three snot-nosed rich kids from California.

Jimmy: Well. Looks like you have it all under control. Thanks for the interview your eminence.

Pope Francis: Anytime Jimmy. Here's an official piece of wood that came from the cross Jesus was crucified on. I've blessed it myself.

Jimmy: Thank you. I'll put it on the wall beside my picture of the last supper.



ROCK 'N ROLL NEWS

Millionaire rapper Snoop Dog and TV cooking personality Martha Stewart have once again teamed up to sell Bic lighters. Says Snoop.....I wouldn't have trusted her but she did some jail time and that makes her cool in my books. Says Martha.....Snoop showed me how to make marijuana brownies and has very high marketing skills. Our combined experience is a non stoppable force. Watch for our new line of bong products coming to a dispensary near you soon. Cough cough..... wooooa..... that's crazy shit Snoop.

Well....it doesn't get any bigger than this. Rolling Stone's front man Mick Jagger approached Sir Paul McCartney to see if he and Ringo Star would like to join his band on their next tour. Says Mick.....we needed a bass player and a drummer and I thought Paul and Ringo would be excited about the idea. Man! Did you ever hit the wrong note on this one Mick. Sir Paul said he would rather busk on the street than play back up for any of the Stones. Keith Richards and Ronnie Woods threatened to quit the Stones if Mick came up with anymore absurd ideas like this. Ringo, on the other hand, thought it would be fun and said it was time for the two rival superstar bands to “bury the hatchet”. It seems like the feud will go on for a little while yet. Says Mick.....I can't get no.....satisfaction.



UFO: SIGHTINGS, ABDUCTIONS and the PARANORMAL

Pope Francis is back in the public spotlight. After mysteriously disappearing for three weeks he has delivered a speech on world television claiming he was abducted by aliens. While praying by himself a space ship hovered above St. Peter's square and beamed him up. They were quite friendly says Pope Francis. They learned Italian very quickly and it wasn't long before we were communicating quite well. They asked if I would be their representative here on earth. Of course I obliged seeing as I already represent God. They liked all the artwork in the Sistine chapel so I gave them my favourite Michael.

Angelo painting as a good will gesture. They said they would return but I asked if they could be more discrete. I'm too old to be flying around in their laser beam.

With over fifty video documented UFO sightings on northern Vancouver Island premier John Horgan has decided it's time to welcome our alien friends and make them feel British Columbia

wants their business. Massive landing strips will be built at the military base in Comox resembling the mysterious Nazca lines of Peru. Says John.....it would be a shame to lose the opportunity to understand our friends from space. They will need the same amenities as any other tourists so it is our obligation to accommodate them. The possibilities of trade are limitless. Let's just hope they like our salmon.

Backstory....Leonard Cohen has come back from the dead and decided to lead humanity to a better more spiritual way of living. He has put his band back together and is travelling the world singing songs of love and peace. It's not going as well as he planned however. Midnight Fiction has sent our international correspondent Jimmy "jetlag" Ferguson to New York for an exclusive interview. Jimmy caught up to Leonard at the Guggenheim museum.....

Jimmy: Hello Leonard. Thanks for giving Midnight Fiction this interview. We are all big fans. So the obvious question is "how's it going"?

Leonard: To be honest Jimmy it's not going so well. I used to sell out every concert but now I'm lucky if they are half full.

Jimmy: Why do you think that is?

Leonard: Well, I'm guessing I just don't have the sex appeal I used to have. I think I have to start writing more songs that appeal to a new market. This peace and love thing just ain't happening and I'm goin' broke. I had to lay off half the band. Things are twice as expensive as they used to be in my first lifetime. I didn't take that into consideration when I decided to reincarnate.

Jimmy: But what about the Messiah thing? There has never been this phenomenon before.

Leonard: That's right. My Jewish fans are all coming out to the gigs but I need a broader audience.

Jimmy: So what are your plans for the rest of the tour?

Leonard: Well, my agent is booking me into smaller venues. I'll be doing the university circuit and some clubs here and there. I think I need another retreat so I'm planning to go back into the monastery to get my head together. Maybe I'll write another book....I don't know.

Jimmy: I'd like to buy one of your CDs Leonard.

Leonard: That's very kind of you Jimmy. Would you like me to sign it?

Jimmy: Please do.

Leonard: Here you go... "to my good friend Jimmy".....how's that?

Jimmy: That's very cool Leonard. I'll catch up with you again when you get back to Canada. Good luck with everything.

Leonard: Thanks Jimmy.



PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

(with Gerry Wilson, president of the Jaded Dinosaur's Club)

Today Gerry is examining “anthropomorphism” an attributing of human qualities to Gods or things.

In our attempt to understand , perhaps even to control the unknown, humans project their own attributes on to some basic organizing principle or entity like God, who now runs it as if he has wants and desires.

We talk of God's will, God's wrath, and God's love as if they are reality, forgetting they are just thoughts.

The intention and will that we find motivating us justifies our doing or not doing the will of the divine. We are locked in our egos because we forsake the reality of totality. We see ourselves

separate or removed from the “whole” and from everything “out there”. We feel compelled to do something about our situation and fix the problem. This only increases our discontent.

We also give human characteristics to animals and objects when they display unhuman characteristics.

This makes us feel confused and insecure.

Again, the illusion seems always with us.



WEST COAST POETRY

Jesus and Mary Magdalen (Joey Scarfone)

Jesus wore leather that night and Mary wore a mini skirt.....very very tight
they had come a long way from Nazareth to the bright lights of Rome
a long way from Babylon
a long way from home

David Bowie flew in from Japan
or so the papers said
he just couldn't miss a party like this
so he decided to come back from the dead

never shy of the spotlight, they really lit up the town
David, Jesus and Mary Magdalen
really knew how to get around

they drew a crowd wherever they went and record sales were great
from the Sistine chapel
to the big apple
the media just couldn't wait

one miracle followed the other but the politicians weren't impressed
Jesus in his leathers and Mary in her cute little dress

Jesus was definitely out of control

he was getting too much power from his rock and roll

his fans adored him while the clergy deplored him

what would they do with this soul

now Jesus and Mary Magdalen had to cove their tracks

their following grew and so did their crew

they needed security to cover their backs

David had left for Amsterdam, he could see the end was near

Jesus and Mary were close to his heart but they wouldn't last a year

everyone wept for Jesus when they saw what was done to him

turning water into wine was just too big a sin

they should have stayed in Nazareth and simply settled down

but Jesus and Mary Magdalen wore a very thorny crown

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR'S NOTE

For those of you who are following FOTD and for those of you who I hope will be following Midnight Fiction, I would like to explain what it took to launch my literary career into this corral of crazies. It's quite simple. It is a mutual love for the immortal Leonard Cohen. I would have to say he is my biggest influence when it comes to poetry. His interviews were most interesting as well. It was as if every time he talked it was poetic. This is why I write about him and the following is an imaginary telephone conversation with him while he is in heaven. It may be heard on youtube with music behind it. It's called.....

WAITING FOR LENNY



hello Lenny, I'm a big fan of yours

I hear they are going to publish a very old book of yours called
A Ballet of Lepers

how painfully seductive

your last CD entitled "you want it darker"

was very prophetic.....

we got it darker

we have endured two years of a global pandemic

and if that wasn't enough

now we have Dr. Evil threatening to drop nuclear bombs

in the large scheme of things

this isn't anything we haven't seen before

but it got me thinking

the world needs another Ghandi.....another spiritual leader

I understand and respect your beliefs

that the Messiah has yet to come

so I was wondering.....

would you be into to taking on that role

I think I could handle the fact that reincarnation is real

and there is no better person to lead our civilization

than you

should you decide to take this job

I would just like to tell you that there is a live poetry reading

every Friday here in Victoria

and I think they would love to have you

as a featured reader

I look forward to your next book, A Ballet of Lepers

but I have to be honest with you....

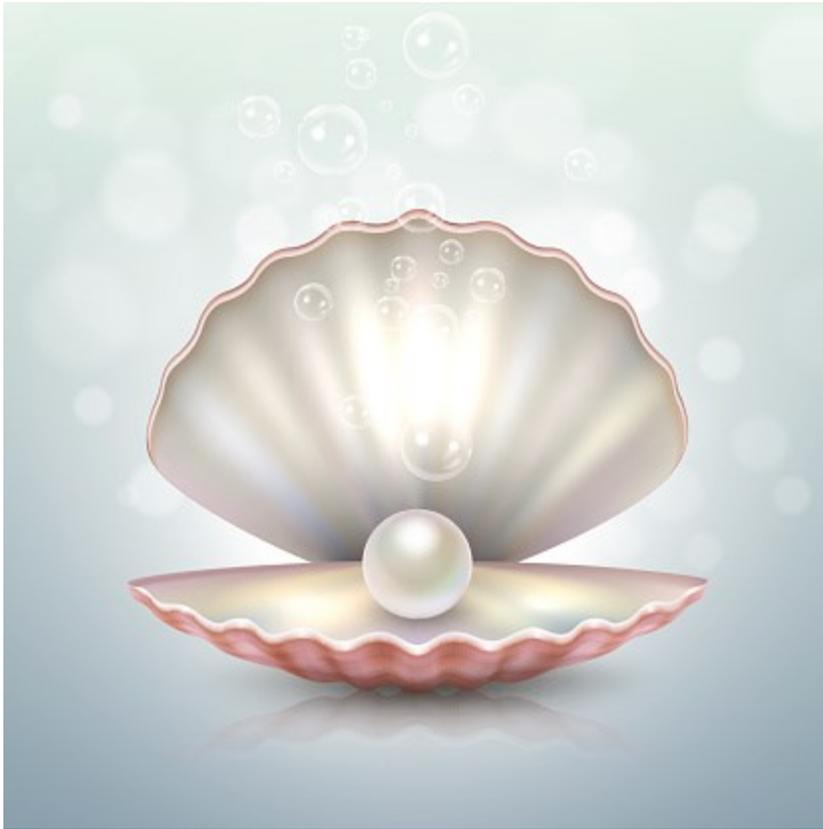
I wasn't crazy about Beautiful Losers

I know it's a stream of consciousness thing

but I found it hard to read

anyway....I'm praying for a miracle

and I'll pick you up at the bus station when you get here



THE HALF LIFE OF PEARLS joey scarfone

the beauty of everything

the eye of the storm

theories of light

and function and form

diamonds of light dancing on waves
lost cities submerged in salt water graves
spirits awaken when souls fall asleep
low flying crows never missing a beat

within the walls
of space and time
stars are born
and then they die

time exists but not for long
broken melodies becoming songs
enjoying the ride as my sail unfurls
unable to measure the half life of pearls

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR'S NOTE:

The words of this poem are lyrics to a song. The images they create would make an excellent video.

Eric Hansen (aka Eric the Read) is Cree and Danish. His Trip Doctor Album with Sheepskin Sound Reduction is on Apple, Spotify and Youtube. He is by night at open mics by day he writes. Capitalism provides his chips and tzatziki in Victoria Canada. Like his likeness on FB or IG @erichansen



MINISKIRT ILLUMINATI

Late one night I couldn't drink anymore, or any less

I went out walking, I was a mess

East Hasting mighta' warped my mind

the dirty places I did stroll

Then by chance I met a rock, and I met roll

I met rock and roll once, they were younger than I thought
They were playing for some cars, outback in the parking lot.

On a blood orange Maserati
Was miniskirt Illuminati
Her hair was its own scene
Oh brother, you feel what I mean

Oh ya pencil skirt from mensa
She was charging up her Tesla
Lip glossy magazine
Oh sister you see what I mean

I met rock and roll once, They were younger than I thought
They were playing for some cars, outback in a parking lot.

Up in front an 82 Prelude
That driver dude, he was dancing nude
For bitcoin boys, golden choice
Top was down on their Rolls Royce

Cruella in the shadows
Dogs ghosting from the gallows
Old broke down Coup De Ville
Probably parked there still

I met a rock and roll once,
they were younger than I thought.



GEMS IN THE ROUGH

These are short stories I have written that I think would make good movies. Mind you I think all my short stories would make good movies but that's beside the point. They are rough drafts. The ideas are there but they definitely could use polishing or at least proper punctuation. Over the two years of pandemic lockdown I found this to be a therapeutic way to escape the invisible confines of the lockdown rules. Now that things have opened up I'm ready to take them to the next level and get busy making movies..... investors welcome.

THE IMPRESSIONIST: The story of a woman who grows up in an orphanage. She has empathic skills and is bi-sexual. She loves reading and is consumed by the worlds she finds in books. Approximately 123 pages.

BIRTH OF THE STRONG: A post pandemic love story. Two people who have burned out in the pandemic and lost their marriages find each other. He is a programmer and she works in a sex shop. They smoke weed every day and start enjoying life again. Approximately 43 pages and growing.

BOOK OF WORDS: A rags to riches story of a down and out writer who comes up with a brilliant idea to make a book with just 10 words....each word repeated for 15 pages. It catches on like wildfire and he has to have it printed in several languages. Approximately 42 pages and growing.

DESPERATE DOGS: A musician has lost all his gigs due to the pandemic lockdown. He is busking to support his wife and children. This is loosely based on a friend who went through such an experience. Approximately 6 pages.

A PANDEMIC ROCK AND ROLL LOVE STORY: Some people thrived and prospered during the pandemic. One of those people was a pot dealer named Mario. A smart young millennial who was ahead

of the curve. Approximately 49 pages and growing.

PAWN POWER: A genius, anti-social chess player finds a woman that brings him out of his monastic lifestyle. 73 pages.

WALKING MAN: A doctor closes his practice because of weird circumstances and decides to lead a much simpler life. 19 pages and I don't know where it's going.....

In the shadow of the day between the water and the wind

something must end....for something

to begin

