

# *MWG Writes On Q*

*A Quarterly Publication*

*The Mississauga Writers Group*

Promoting  
the Written  
Word!

# MWG Writes On Q

## From The Editor

The Mississauga Writers Group is proud to launch the first issue of its quarterly magazine *MWG Writes on Q*. Our group was established in January 2012 with the goal of providing the writing community a platform where they could interact with other writers, get feedback, share experiences and learn from each other.

During the last two years, our group has been able to sustain its mission and has successfully provided members with a relaxed and fun environment where we all strive to learn, share and improve. The Mississauga Writers Group published its first anthology in 2014. *Word Fest, Celebrating Ideas* is a collection of prose and poetry and represents the diversity and the inherent talent of the contributors.

*MWG Writes on Q* will provide readers a wide variety of prose, poetry, writing tips, short stories and anything that we think is worth writing. It is our goal to promote the written word and that is exactly what we intend to do with our digital magazine. We hope you will enjoy it and we would be delighted if you could give us feedback so that we improve more and more.

Happy Reading!

**Samna Ghani**

*Editor*

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# Featured Author

## Nicholas Boving



Nicholas Boving has worked as a mining engineer, as a docker, fruit inspector and forester. His diversity is evident in his books and screenplays. Nicholas is the author and publisher of the Maxim Gunn series of action/adventure books. He has written fifteen other novels: drama, thriller and action/adventure and several screenplays.

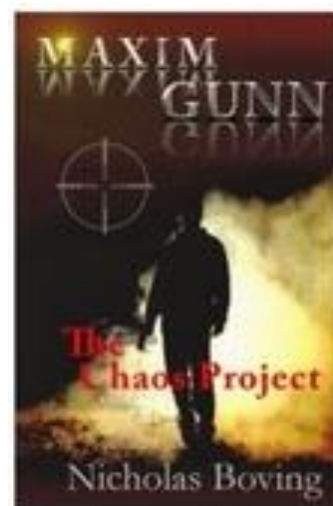
In an exclusive interview, Nicholas Boving sheds some light on what he writes, why he writes and his writing process. Enjoy!

### Why do you write?

Why do I write? Good question. I just can't think of anything quite as satisfying even if I never make a dime out of it. Because it's what I love to do. This is the best reason. Also, living in a fantasy world is rather fun, not to mention playing God. However, to quote Dr. Samuel Johnson. "Sir, no man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money". Which may seem to contradict the comment above, but let's face it, not a lot of writers are prepared to invest such a great deal of effort and time on something just for the fun of it.

### By: Samna Ghani

Regional Editor, Health Management.org; Author with Books to Go Now and Laurus Publishing.



# Featured Author

## Which writers inspire you?

More than any others, the ones that were read to me by my grandfather. They shaped my literary forms whether I think so or not. I'm a little older than most of you – make that a lot – so when I mention Rider Haggard, Rudyard Kipling, Conan Doyle and John Buchan, don't say "Huh?" There've been a lot of others along the way, including the late Hammond Innes, who was the master of the thriller in which you get the horror and mechanics of a crime without the comforting guidance of a detective or secret agent: just a protagonist dropped in the middle of a pile of you-know-what, and by luck and sweat gets the better of the baddies. Of course he also gets the girl, which makes the whole thing worthwhile.

Depending on the genre I'm writing in at the moment, the influences of similar writers from the past pop up and are welcomed. Leslie Charteris (The Saint), Sapper (Bulldog Drummond), Dennis Wheatley (occult thrillers). Of course there are many others: too many to list.

Also, the screenwriter and director, Quentin Tarantino said, "I steal from every movie ever made." I can also say I probably steal from every book I've ever read. There's always something that catches your eye, something worth saying again in a different way. This is quite natural and I think every writer does it, consciously or otherwise.

I regret that not very many of the modern writers find their way onto my Kindle. I find them too slick and basically implausible. Somewhere along the way thriller writers have lost the art of telling "The rattling good yarn". I guess that's my loss, but it's also a loss to the new generation of reading public. I love sci-fi, but it's got to be good.

## What is your favourite book and why?

Oh Lord. This is an unanswerable question. There are so many I go back to from time to time. You can however scrub any of the recent ones – I'm talking more from a man's point of view – as so many of them have just climbed onto some bandwagon that involves vampires, zombies, fantasy worlds or peculiar religious sects out for control. No names, no pack drill, but you know who I mean. However, if pressed I'd say I still go back to the works of John Buchan, leavened with Kipling, and a sprinkling of Winnie the Pooh. At least my tastes are eclectic.

## What do you think is the easiest thing about writing? What is the most difficult?

Thinking up new stories. I don't know about others, but my imagination well never runs dry. I once had something to say about that, to the effect that those who complain about writers block generally don't have enough imagination, or else they were lazy.

# Featured Author

The most difficult part for me is editing. Some writers enjoy the process: I hate it. Once upon a time editing was done by professionals employed by publishers: these days the poor writers are expected to do it themselves. Content editing, copy editing, line editing. I confess that by the time one of my novels is ready for the Amazon Mill, I'm sick of the sight of it.

**From books that have already been published by other authors, which book do you wish you had written?**

That's easy. None of them. Being a writer I find it all too easy to take a so-called classic and pick it to pieces. It's a terrible habit, but I can't get out of it. I see a turn of phrase by one of the world's literary icons and think, "Why in God's name did he say that?" Which is probably why so many great writers never read their work again after it's been published.

**How do you market your books?**

All the usual ways I suppose. Social Media – I have Facebook pages dedicated to books I've written and try to keep them up to date. Twitter, of course, LinkedIn, Goodreads, and my own website. However, to paraphrase a well-known businessman, "I know half the effort I spent on advertising is wasted; I just don't know which half." And, there are supposed to be three secrets to selling; only no one knows what they are.

One thing I have found out is that you should give very careful consideration to your titles. You really need to make them not only memorable and apposite, but so they'll stand out on search engines. I called one of my books "*The Warlock*". Huge mistake although it sounds good if you're looking for that "kind of book". It gets over 5,000 possibles on Amazon. But it just doesn't stand out. Now, "*The Malthorpe Slaughterhouse*" gets just one: the right one.

**Any new release? If yes, what is it about?**

Yes. I've got another thriller with an occult flavor coming out shortly. It's called "*The Dark Side of God*", which should give a bit of a hint. As soon as the cover is finished by my multi-talented son, it'll be going up on CreateSpace and Amazon, so watch out and keep those Kindles running hot. Better still, snuggle up with the paperback.

Book blurb

David Morgan, an investigative journalist researching the dissolution of an ancient abbey is fascinated by a sidebar to what he sees as just another piece he can uncover and sell to the highest bidder.

Sylvanus Falconi owns the land around the Abbey of St Mary Zion and is the last in a family line that

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that stretches back to a Roman Centurion, Gaius Sylvanus Falconius, who witnessed the Crucifixion. He is the final guardian of a dark and explosive secret called simply, "The Keeping".

The story is a deadly chess game between Falconi and Morgan culminating in battle on the Downs of Sussex and a final act of unbelievable destruction.

"*The Dark Side of God*" is part biographical exploration, part love story and part exposé of the Falconi family's long-guarded secret in a world of darkness and the occult.

You can find out more about Nicholas through:

Website: <http://www.tauruspub.net>

Blog: <http://tauruspub.blogspot.com/>

Nicholas Boving's Books: <http://on.fb.me/14SHgtp>

Maxim Gunn: <http://on.fb.me/1svJmcS>

<http://www.amazon.com/-/e/B005G7ZOE4>

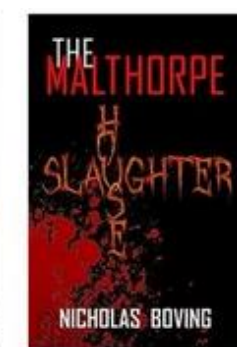
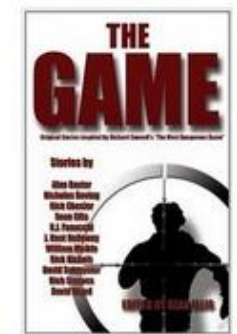
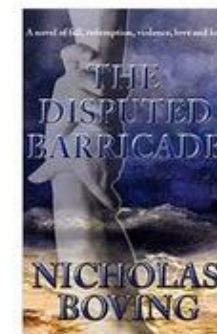
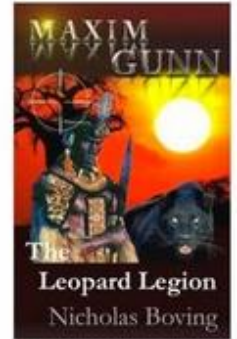
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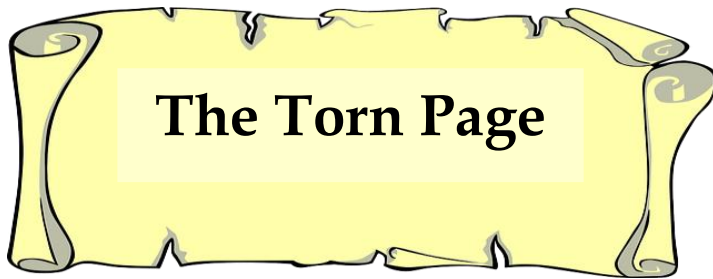
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All books on CreateSpace <http://bit.ly/JpfKrY>

All Maxim Gunn on Amazon <http://amzn.to/1rPrIua>



# Poetry



## The Torn Page

a moment once fell from the face  
of a clock, twisting forever the fabric  
of time.

from the setting sun melted  
a drop of gold. day dawned again, but  
the glory was tainted forever.

across the desert plains drifted a  
lone melody - maiming as it left, a  
grand opus just born.  
a whisper rode in on a teardrop one day

let me tell you  
a story, it said. once upon a time there  
was a world. built on precious memories  
of love and war. but  
waiting silently in the  
wings, was the ghost of a creation. A world  
that never  
was. A world that could have  
been. A world that

fell from a  
dreaded void at the heart of  
an open book, and

left in its place a silence that  
was greater than the mightiest  
roar.

### By: Rashmi Pluscec

Author of poetry book *Chaos*; poet on  
anthologies *Threads, Passages, Ballads* and  
*Word Fest*.

perhaps in another time, another  
place, the words have come  
together and created a grand  
saga.

for now I have this story.  
the story of an  
imperfect life.  
a perfect death.

# Heart to Heart

## Max & Me

When it came to Max - our handsome senior black lab golden mix, fate dealt us a cruel one-two punch. We thought we had narrowly squeaked past the first blow, when the second devastated us. My nightmare started on 5<sup>th</sup> October, the second day of our long planned Montana trip. Max was home in the care of my adult children. We were driving near Grand Teton when my daughter called with deadly news.

"Max's hind legs are paralyzed. We are taking him to the emergency vet hospital."

My vacation was over right then. Tears blurred my eyes and I handed over the driving to my husband.

After some time, another call, "The vet thinks it's best to euthanize him, it's either slipped disc or spinal cord tumor, an MRI is needed but they think he's too old".

"Hang on! I'm flying back right now."

I was numb, unable to accept I will not be there for my boy, when he needed me most. I asked my husband to drive to Jackson airport to see if any flight was available. After checking several options, including flying out of Bozeman or Idaho Falls, everything seemed complicated and expensive. I told my husband and sister they could continue the vacation as everything was booked and paid for. But they refused to go on if I went back.

I felt cornered and desperate. I suggested that I could get home, be with Max when he was euthanized and return to Montana, though I knew it was a crazy and costly plan. I would rather spend money on Max's treatment. Given these constraints, my children reassured me they will do their best when the unthinkable happened. They loved Max as much as I

## By: Chitra Ayyar

A passionate supporter of animal rights and their cause, Chitra hopes to be their voice in her writing. This piece is a true account of her last days with Max, her beloved dog.





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did, so I reluctantly agreed.

Several phone calls later, I got some better news. At the hospital, Max showed some improvement in his hind legs. There was a faint stirring of hope. The vet suggested neurologist referral and MRI, which showed two prolapsed discs pressing on his spinal cord. Treatment was started with necessary medicines. When Max could walk, though shakily, he was discharged. As I got these real time updates, we felt the immediate crisis was past and could continue our vacation, though my thoughts were always with Max. I sent all my prayers and positive energy to him. I also appreciated the maturity and dependability of my children in this crisis.

Encouragingly, Max could walk with support of a harness I had got him before. He had bladder and bowel control, but, he could not lift himself off the floor and needed to be helped up. He was moved to my son's house which had no stairs. As I heard of his progress, I relaxed and enjoyed the beauty of Yellowstone though I was also eager to return home. From Pearson airport, we drove to my son's house. Poor Max was lying still, oblivious and unresponsive to my presence. I was depressed to find him like this but my son assured me he will be okay.

Early morning on Thanksgiving, I showered and packed a few items, including a perfume spray to get rid of the sickroom smell and a soft sleeping bag for Max to lie on. He looked more alert and relaxed now. I determined to do whatever I could to help him recover- stroking his soft fur, talking to him, hoping he understood my love and commitment. He wanted to get up, so I helped him and walked him to the yard, where he passed a lot of urine- a side effect of the steroids. I noticed that though his gait was unsteady, he was able to walk reasonably well. My hopes and spirits lifted. At night, Max needed to go out 2-3 times, so we decided to take turns sleeping on the living room couch. The next morning, I brought my work laptop to my son's house and set it up. But work was the last thing on my mind, Max was top priority. I took him out for periodic short walks and was thrilled with his progress. Every step he took felt like a giant leap towards his eventual recovery. I thought "My baby boy is getting better, together we'll beat this!"

A week went by, some days good when he walked fine, some days alarming when his legs would suddenly give way and he'd flop to the floor helplessly. I didn't let that discourage us but focused on the overall steady progress he made. I gave him his medicines diligently, though he resisted. I planned to move him to our house, his home, but I had to figure out what to do about the many steps we had inside and outside the house, even from the deck to the backyard. He had to make that trip several times a day. I hoped he could be trained to use a pee pad, but for a house-trained dog like Max, that was a big challenge.

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Sunday, we got Max up the ramp into the car and took him home. We got him into our backyard where he ambled, unsteady but happy. Back up the ramp to the deck and into the living room. He seemed glad to be home at last, the first time since his dreadful ordeal started weeks ago. I spent all my time with him. At night, I slept on the couch near him, to check on him periodically and help him to the yard if needed.

Monday the 20<sup>th</sup> of October was a big day- Max was driven to the hospital for a follow up appointment with his neurologist. He was greeted warmly by the staff.

"Hello Max! It's nice to see you walking!" "Look at this handsome boy!"

They were all smiles. The neurologist examined him and seemed happy with Max's progress. I gave her all the details of his current health and mobility status. I asked her about acupuncture and deep laser treatment for his condition.

She discussed how spine surgery was the only definitive cure, at a cost of \$5,000, but we both knew his age was a limiting factor. Also, Max had a suspected urinary infection, which could get serious if untreated. She prescribed some antibiotics and sent his urine for testing.

My heart sank. More medicines! He was on so many medicines that already wrecked his appetite. I mentioned this, but she said the antibiotics were necessary. After paying another hefty bill, we left the hospital amid much cheers and returned home. I was so proud of my boy. I stayed close to him, loving him and telling him what a good dog he is.

The contractor came in the afternoon and built a gradually sloping ramp across the deck steps, so it would be easier on his back when he walked up and down. Max was taken for a trial run when it was ready. It took a lot of support to walk him down the ramp slowly and even more effort to get him back up. We had to do this several times each day, so we needed to get it right. The yard was his territory, where he'd played, rolled in the snow and lay down on the grass, so I let him enjoy it.

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October started out bright and sunny. We set out for a little stroll, but he started walking further. The dog in the corner house barked and Max stopped and listened. Then he continued on and on. I was anxiously aware we'd gone too far and firmly turned him back towards home. Halfway through, he couldn't walk anymore. I called my husband, hoping he could come pick us up. He seemed reluctant, so I helped Max walk slowly, stopping frequently. Once home, I made him lie down and rest his tired body. Inside, I was crying, "My poor boy, who would walk for

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hours when he was younger..." I gave him extra cuddles to let him know I loved him, no matter what.

I started his antibiotics. That evening, Max wanted another stroll, but it was raining. "If it's nice tomorrow, I'll take you for a walk", I promised. I was so worried about his low appetite and relieved to see him finally eat some food.

"Mom, tonight, I'll sleep on the couch," my daughter offered. Gratefully, I went upstairs and crashed. Early Wednesday morning, my daughter shook me awake saying Max had vomited and there was blood in his vomit. I rushed down and saw the horrifying evidence. "Oh, no! He must have bleeding ulcers from all the meds!" Max grew restless, his breathing more labored and his tongue started turning blue. My husband got the car started. We called the hospital and asked them to have a gurney waiting. We got Max into the car, stretched out on the back seat gasping, his head cradled on my lap. How many times Max sat on the back seat of this same car, heading out to the dog park, in happier times! I stroked and comforted him, while crying and banging my fist, frustrated at the slow traffic, while life was ebbing from my beloved pet. And I felt powerless to stop it.

At the hospital, Max was loaded onto the gurney and rushed inside. We went in and filled out forms. It looked bad for him. The hospital gave us a private room to wait in. We cried, knowing what was coming next. After about ten minutes, the vet came in. "Max's condition is bad, we couldn't get a blood pressure. There's some massive internal bleeding and his vital signs are going down. He's suffering. It would be kinder to just let him go."

We understood Max was not going to make it alive from this blow. There was really nothing to be done, except end his suffering. We said we were ready, consent forms were signed. Then Max was wheeled in. I just rested my head on his body, sobbing, stroking his fur and softly talking to him. I told him how much I loved him and will miss him forever. The vet inserted the needle as I lovingly held my boy one last time. A few seconds later, the vet said "He's gone now," and left us to have some quiet moments with Max. After several minutes, I tore myself away from his still body, paid the bill and left, numb with grief and hopelessness.

We reached home shocked and silent. It felt like all the joy had been sucked out from me, leaving an empty, sad shell. How did all this happen so suddenly just when I felt he was improving? A world without Max seemed meaningless. I read some comforting poems from a pet loss website. I wished I could get some evidence that Max was fine in whichever realm he had gone to, then I can recover. I'll

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miss him, but I'll at least accept his loss, in the hope we'll reunite sometime, somewhere over the rainbow.



Last walk.

# A Thing of Bits & Pieces

## What's it all about?

This is not going to be Writing 101. If you want a course, then spend your hard-earned money on the somewhat dubious offerings of a writer's workshop. You won't learn how to write from classes: You'll only learn what someone else thinks. You learn from reading, and writing. You learn from yourself.

I hope to pass on a few tips gathered and learned over the course of more years than I care to admit, and over three million - yes 3,000,000 - words hammered out in the form of novels, short stories, screenplays and assorted jottings. In other words, this is about writing fiction.

There'll be no plan, no storyline: just thoughts and a few do's and don'ts.

So that's my introduction, and I can't tell you how flattered I was when Samna asked me to write a column for the magazine. I just hope you think it's worth your time.

Let's get one thing out in the open right away. There is no right way to write, apart from spelling, a modicum of correct grammar, and punctuation to make it readable and to get your meaning across.

There's a reason for this - the spelling part anyway - and a quick look at written English prior to Dr. Samuel Johnson's landmark dictionary and his attempt at standardisation of English spelling, will show you the utter chaos that existed up to then.

Writing fiction is an art; it is a craft; and like all such cannot be learned in the manner of accounting, mathematics or one of the sciences. Artists and craftsmen can be given a few pointers but they must hone their craft in solitude. Practice, practice,

## By: Nicholas Boving

Author of the "Maxim Gunn" and "Frances West" series of action/adventure books.



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practice, until what emerges on the page is something that gives you that “Ah ha!” moment.

Here’s an apposite quote from Elmore Leonard. *“If proper usage gets in the way, it may have to go. I can’t allow what we learned in English composition to disrupt the sound and rhythm of the narrative.”*

Furthermore, there is no roadmap for writers. There’s no arrow saying “You are here”, with a lot of other signs pointing to other places you may or may not want to go. You can only look back at where others have been and learn. Then you must go into the unknown, the places marked on the map, “Here there be Dragons”. This is the only way to progress in your journey, because to stay on the well-trodden path is merely to revisit what has already been done. Exploration will find your unique voice.

Your unique voice, which will only come with enormous effort and practice, is so very necessary, unless you plan on churning out what used to be called penny dreadfuls and pulp – though pulp is making a comeback, and the best of its writers do have a talent. Dr. Johnson had a nasty habit of being right. This is his answer to some aspiring writer. *‘Your manuscript is both good and original, but the part that is good is not original and the part that is original is not good.’*

However, to find that ‘voice’ will mean severe self-criticism and the ability to look yourself in the face and admit that some of what you’ve done is plain rubbish. Delete, shred, and start again. To quote Lillian Hellman, *“Nothing you write, if you hope to be any good, will ever come out as you first hoped.”* But that can’t stop you from trying, and simply bears out what I’ve just said. Also, Arthur Quiller-Couch said, *“Whenever you feel an impulse to perpetrate a piece of exceptionally fine writing, obey it ... and delete it before sending your manuscript to the press.”*

I used to show my writing around before it was really finished, in the hope of hearing something good. Now I realize that was just vanity. I no longer do. I wait, polish it as much as I’m capable of; find all those stupidities, those absurdities, all that abysmal writing, and then, just maybe I’ll show it to someone who is a reading enthusiast or another writer I respect, and ask their opinion. Remember, an opinion is just that, and you can take it or leave it.

And by the way, there are no secrets to writing. Well, they say there are three, but no one knows what they are.

There is however, one absolute in writing fiction. Never, never, never bore your reader. No matter how you start your story: whether it’s a slow build up gathering tension, or an explosive start like an RPG firing, your reader has got to want to know what’s on the next page. Lose that desire, and

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you've got a lot of catching up to do, because in writing, as with a many other things, you only get one chance to make a first impression.

No one knows when mankind started telling fiction stories, but a guess might be when frightened little groups were huddled around camp fires scared of the night and what might be lurking out there with an unhealthy interest in them. Palaeolithic Man had a lot to be scared of, and no doubt some smart character started dreaming up the first ghost stories – and we've never looked back. Man has a primordial need to hear stories, to remember the past, to exercise his imagination: that is why novelists succeed, because they not only entertain, but are necessary.

As the Persian Poet says, man's life is transitory, literature endures forever. I'd like to stress the word "literature", as opposed to the mindless rubbish which so often gets published. Literature has some pretensions to excellence, and perhaps worth keeping. The rest should be consigned to the garbage heap where it belongs – and I include a lot of my own stuff in that category.

As you well know, when you tell people you are a writer they always tell you they have an 'idea.' You hate to be rude, but ideas are a dime a dozen for a writer. Come up with a few ideas and then find the connecting tissue that draws them together. Too many writers I know write cinematically - they come up with terrific scenes, but they just string them together - they have no idea of the importance of theme, structure, and the line of suspense. Did I mention practice earlier on?

Does the thought of writing a five hundred page novel overwhelm you? Does it seem an impossible task? Try breaking it down into bite-sized pieces, or at least chapters.

No one said you have to start at page one and work your way through to "The End". If you've got a great last chapter or scene, write it first (it'll give you something to aim for). Got a great love scene, a bit of action, some killer dialogue? Write them now, because I promise you that you won't remember them later.

In a slight contradiction to what I've just said, novels are made up of scenes; some sequential, some in parallel depending on the POV. Treat them as such.

Of course it's a good idea to have a "plan", and an outline of what you want the story to say, how you want it to go, and where you want it to end. But you can't think of the writing process in the same way as they shoot a movie. All locations tend to be shot at one time because shooting them

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sequentially is expensive and time-consuming – think of all the equipment you have to move. Don't get stuck in that "page one, line one" trap.

One of the fun parts of being a fiction writer is that you get to play God. You're able to express opinions which are not only yours, but which can also be utterly contrary to what you believe. Also, if a character gets objectionable, or is just plain in the way, you can kill him off with a few keystrokes.

One final thought for today on which I'll expand a bit later, is about beat. Beat is about conflict, holding multiple opposing thoughts at the same time. Beat is, "Boy finds girl. Boy loses girl. Boy finds girl and they live happily ever after." It's about getting your hero up a tree and throwing rocks at him. No worthwhile story can exist without conflict.



# Health and Wellness

## A Simple Breath

One of the things we take for granted is our breath. Our breath is a constant flow and without realizing it, our breath mimics how we physically feel. When stressed, our breath is short and fast and when relaxed, it is long and slow. Breathing through our mouth is quicker and more stressful but doesn't draw enough air into our lungs. This causes us to take more inhalations because more breaths are needed to compensate and we tire easier from the extra effort. Nostril breaths are slower and draw more air directly into the lungs and need less repetition and effort.

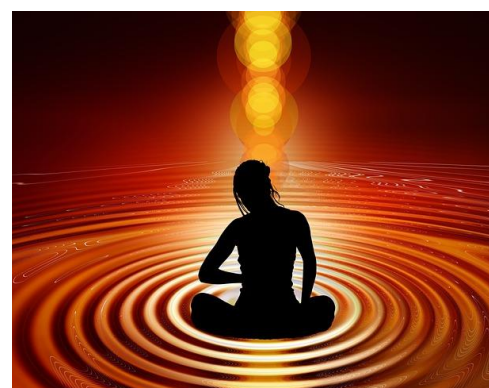
How we breathe is also important. Mouth breathing draws the air into the mouth down the esophagus and into the stomach. There is a small opening in the esophagus as the air goes down which allows some air into the windpipe/trachea and then into the lungs. The problem with a mouth breath is you swallow air with all the dirt and contamination into the stomach and the lungs.

Nostril breathing goes through the nose and directly down the windpipe/trachea and straight into the lungs. The nose filters and warms the air and the movement of the air going through the nose causes a slight vibration which massages the brain and sinuses located behind the nose. More volume of air enters the lungs through the nose and less effort is needed for the intake of air. The nostril breath replenishes the air in the lungs better than the mouth breath.

Unfortunately most people breathe through the mouth which is the most unsanitary. Retraining yourself to nostril breathe isn't difficult and it takes us back to a more natural way like

**By: Elizabeth Banfalvi**

Certified Reflexologist. Author of "Meditation" book series. Conducts workshops on stress & meditation.



**core**  
OPTIMUM HEALTH

# Health and Wellness

we all had as a child.

Because you can only sniff through your nostrils, the easiest way to teach yourself how to nostril breathe is to practice the "Sniffing Breath". Start by taking 4 quick and sharp sniffs and then release the breath with one long exhalation. Repeat 4 times. At first do this several times during the day when possible and continue for a few weeks. In time, you will readjust yourself to nostril breathing naturally. Some of the side effects of this will be that the muscles surrounding your rib cage will start to be tender. Why? Because this breath uses all the lobes of your lungs but especially the lower lobes and this forces the rib cage to expand with the forceful sniffs - this tenderness will show you that you are doing the breaths properly. Another side effect is that accumulated dust and residue that have fallen over the years to these lower lobes are being disturbed and broken up. You will probably start to spit up this residue which again is a great thing because it shows you are breathing correctly.

The more you practice this breath, the more nostril breathing will become natural. Exhalations are also important. Exhalations should be longer than inhalations. Here either mouth or nostril exhalations are fine but different and beneficial in many ways. Mouth exhalations are great for energizing especially using a series of short spurts of exhalations which draws in your belly button. Long nostril exhalations are great for relaxation and soothing a frazzled body. Lengthen your exhalations as much as you can. Work on both types for the best benefits.

The other benefit of a longer exhalation is that it releases toxins. The body needs to keep a smooth flow and breathing is a constant flow - the easier and more relaxed the breath is, the better the body flows and nostril breathing best accommodates this. You are more energized the easier your breathing is.

Once you have the nostril breath perfected, the "Held Breath" is next. This helps you control the flow of your breath. Why - so you can learn to set the pace for your breathing. Breath control is so important in exercising, physical endurance, and enhancing control in focus and movement.

For example, if you find yourself catching or holding your breath often, you might feel as if you lose your breath and need to gasp air quickly - this breath will definitely help. Many people do this and don't realize it. When you practice the held breath, you teach your breathing to start again naturally without realizing it.

The held breath is simple, inhale, hold the breath for a count of four, exhale and hold again for a count of four. Practice regularly and if you fear holding your breath, this usually resolves it. It might feel uncomfortable at first but it becomes easier with practice. A Simple Breath - with practice, it will be and you will be healthier because of it.

# Heart to Heart

## Him

*The Cycle: "Songs"*

*"Fall is a state of mind if you asked me. It could be a low budget idea wandering around neighbourhood to watch the rainbow colours of leafs or it could be a high cost of traveling an universal space scabbling original reflections directly on an open sky and avoiding that "deja vu" of regrets – when the horizon comes too close."*

Only he can have such casual way of opening a novel. When he writes he lets his imagination jump around almost childishly and the words blend thoughts the way you can or can not understand, but you're tempted to ransack all those ideas he offers or just accept them. The bookshop is packed as I expected to be...he's signing and of course isn't looking at anyone.

"My name is Anne"...and I wish I could see her face - she's a red haired short girl, woman - who knows - anxious to get his autograph and see his eyes.

No chance...for him showing his hair it's enough, my dear, I know better!

"You never change" -he says - how he knew it's me? He couldn't feel it, it didn't happen for such a long time..."You look like you forgot to age - it's true". His eyes are still blue, but the red hair girl would be surprised of their opacity...not me!

"It could be possible that I'm blind also but objectively said you're a fabulous illusion, a fairy tale princess" and he didn't even blink being stupid, as usual he makes literature...his way to hide himself and he doesn't care if you get tired rummage all over for real him.

"You'd never use another perfume, would you?"

He asked with a calmed voice but with that raspy tone I knew and I'm pretty sure he still smokes too much, he still drinks too much and he's still too slim and tall, but something is missing though - he is a snap-shot of a dead eyed photographer. Life in a cage, I could say a prison mist or maybe a fall over, that kind we all try to avoid...it gives him a spectral appearance and I don't like it.

By: Maria Cecilia Nicu

Columnist for Romanian newspaper "Observatorul". Writer of novels, short stories and poetry.



# Heart to Heart

"This Fall, for you" he said and signed on the first page right under the dedication, "To her...always here"

Who's she? And what a hell is he trying to prove? Am I already dead or what? Maybe I am. It's something blurry in his eyes...detachment or even worst, relinquish.

"I need to ask you something, you see, it is not clear to me whose fall you're talking about here, yours or mine?"

"The book is mine, isn't it?"

Of course it's his, no wonder he looks baffled...and I have no idea why I put my foot into my mouth: "Who's her?"

"You are!"

I knew it was not a good idea!

"You're such a summer" ...I recall him saying and I never thought seriously about that until now, I remember the roughness of his voice and I am surprised that he didn't use the index finger to highlight his disapproval or maybe his disappointment. I knew then as I know now he loves autumn, chromatic colours and flying leaves but I never held myself to look deeper in his chasm of feelings ...I would've understood much better who he was.

Definitely I'm an idiot! Why I thorn myself to translate what is untranslatable? He was, he is a lousy masochistic bastard who doesn't give a damn for anyone and anything...he drowns himself in drinks, suffocates his lungs in cigarettes and puts his mind on that rollercoaster of reclusive solitude

Of course I loved him, damn it, I still do!

"When I was young" ...that is a verse from a song I like if I remembered correctly "My mama said" ...eh, no, my mama never said anything at least not about my derailed wanderings, anyway the age is a retro-scan of years past.

xxx

The park is almost deserted, the leaves travel chaotically as it happens always in fall, an old man walks his dog dangling the leash and nothing else moves, it is so quiet that I can hear my thoughts clear and washed of all my thunder. I actually know: he didn't leave me he didn't leave anything he just retired himself in the pages of his books...seeing him is an illusion!

He just ceases to exist!

# Poetry

## the silence of a friend

when winter lasts six months  
and the TV shows only crimes,  
wars,  
or other disasters

when the world map is changing  
from one day to the next  
while politicians sharpen their elbows  
and shout slogans

when countless ads urge you to consume  
while on a different channel  
the doctors tell you  
what's going to happen to you if you do

when movies' greatness  
is measured in box office receipts,  
movie stars come out of the assembly line,  
and the banks rule supreme over the world

when people speech  
surrenders to electrons' whims  
and the planet's loud gossip disturbs  
whatever tranquility is left

then  
if the voice of a friend  
- your island of peace  
in the surrounding chaos-  
disappears,  
his sudden long silence  
is the beginning of death

## By: Veronica Lerner

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