



# The Valley Scribe



Newsletter of the San Fernando Branch of the California Writers Club

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## Learn How to Give as Good as You Get

On Saturday December 7, the San Fernando Valley Chapter of the California Writers Club will welcome author, screenwriter and writing instructor Bernard Selling to its monthly meeting, where he will discuss the art of giving feedback with his presentation, "Getting and Giving Very Helpful Feedback in Stories." The meeting starts at 1 p.m. with registration beginning at 12:45 p.m. at the Motion Picture and TV Fund, 23388 Mulholland Drive, Woodland Hills, in the Saban Community Room. A \$10 tax-deductible donation per guest is requested.



**Bernard Selling**

"A key aspect of succeeding as a writer is knowing when and where to get guidance, support, and assistance. As writers, most of us need feedback from members of a writer's group, an editor, or some other trusted source," says Selling, who has taught creative writing at University of California Santa Cruz, Loyola University, and University of California Irvine.

In his experience, Selling has discovered many writing groups do not know how to provide good feedback. He has created a process, known as "Non-invasive, Non-judgmental, Corrective, and Affirming" (NINJCA), that allows for people to provide advice that's unintrusive and positive. While pursuing his master's in film, Selling relayed he had a "horrible experience" in getting feedback from his peers.

"The feedback process which I created avoids being invasive and brutal, on the one hand, or vapid and meaningless, on the other. It tells the writer what the listener is experiencing," he says.

In his nearly 40 years of writing, Selling has penned nine books on the Italian Renaissance, ten screenplays, most recently the screenplay

for the feature film *Astro*, and seven books on writing. His bestseller, *Writing from Within*, has gone through five editions. His newest book is *Penned In at the Creative Corral*.

**-Stephanie Barbara Dufner, Media Relations**

### Books by Bernard Selling



# President's Message

**W**inter is fast approaching—which is hard to tell living here in So CAL. We often have days with 80 degree weather. In contrast, Burlington, Vermont has early snow fall and highs in the mid 20's. If you like cold, Burlington is a great place to be right now. (Please don't tell my sister I said that.) My brother-in-law said they expect a high of 18 degrees this Friday.

It's holiday time. Christmas, Hanukkah and Milad un Nabi, which is the Muslim holiday celebrating the birth of there holy prophet, Muhammad, all occur around this time of the year. Of course, what I think this means, or should mean, is that December is a time for prayer, reflection and gatherings with family and friends. Those activities were certainly what the nuns preached when I was in Catholic grammar school—plus going to church as much as possible, of course.

I find the emphasis on buying lots of presents to be a pain in the neck! My kids are in their 30's, so what do I know about what they want or need? Of course, I can ask, which I'll probably do, but then where's the fun of surprising them? I could insist they give me five suggestions, so in some way it will be a surprise. But I don't think that maneuver would be appreciated.

Getting back to more serious business, I see the winter holidays as a time to connect with family and friends, remember the folks who need help and WRITE. It's a way to get in touch with your inner self and to connect with people beyond the folks you already know.

Go for it !!!



Bob Okowitz

—Bob Okowitz

**Vermont snowman wearing a Burlington scarf.**

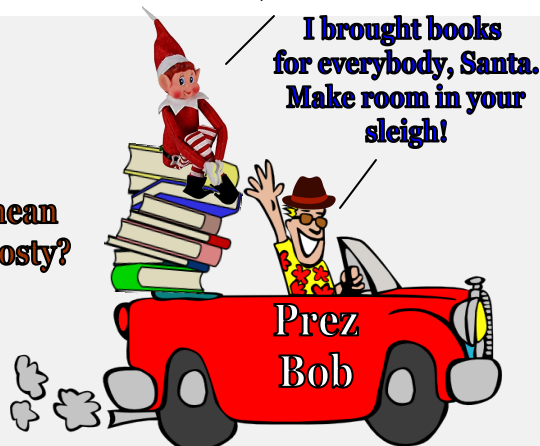


CWC-SFV

**Here we come, Boss!**

**"Hey, Bob!  
Long time no see!  
Don't be a stranger.**

**Don't you mean  
bob sled, Frosty?**



2

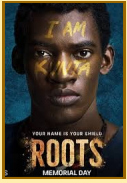
**Make sure you've got a copy of YOUR book. "DugIn." for Mrs. Claus, the former Clara McBlarney!**



DECEMBER 2019

## These creative works have one thing in common,

book



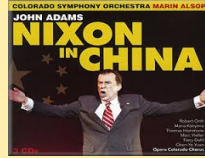
movie



t.v. series



opera



video game



musical



**"They're all examples of historical fiction," said our November speaker and author, Debra Tash.**

**D**ebra Tash told her Saban Room audience, "Historical fiction – at its best – is an art form. Before humans developed an alphabet and a written language, history was told around campfires."

She explained how in ancient times, a tribe or clan's history was memorized, interpreted by storytellers (the first voice actors) and found form in song and verse. For thousands of years, important events, folk fables, rituals, and religious dogma were memorized and passed down from generation to generation. A people's culture was kept alive in song, murals, cave paintings, jewelry, masks, special clothing and headdresses. When words learned by rote were fashioned into symbols and then an alphabet, written history was born.

Today, historical fiction is a literary genre in which a plot takes place sometime in the past. Although the term is generally used to denote an historical novel, it can also be applied to theatre, opera, cinema and television, video games and graphic novels.

Tash commented, "Historical fiction writers must walk the line between truth and fiction. An historical fiction author must meet almost the same criteria as any novelist: create an intriguing plot, characters, dialogue, scenes and drama. Know your character, thoroughly research the time and place of the drama and write in the style of the era. But your dialogue can't be too authentic - conversations should be comprehensible to a your readers. In other words, be very careful. One can invent characters and conversations, but historical events must be presented accurately."

Why do millions of readers find the past so interesting? Perhaps because there are so many imaginative and dramatic ways to portray an historical event.

A historical fiction writer must do in-depth research to create a story's setting, plot and characters.

Authors like Tash search the stacks in libraries, private collections, and census records. Thanks to the Internet, an author has access to thousands of websites with eyewitness accounts in private journals, official reports and records. Need visual examples for a story? Just type the right word or phrase into a search engine. Google it, in other words.

Our speaker had further advice for an historical fiction writer: "To know your character, read all you can find in their bios and their own writing. To make your text readable - as in entertaining - don't go into too much dry detail and tedious backstory. Using your imagination, strive to make your characters and their adventures come alive to a reader."

Tash emphasized that a historical fiction writer should reflect a story's era. Modern slang and expressions in the midst of a story set in a past century would immediately detract from the storyline and distract the reader.

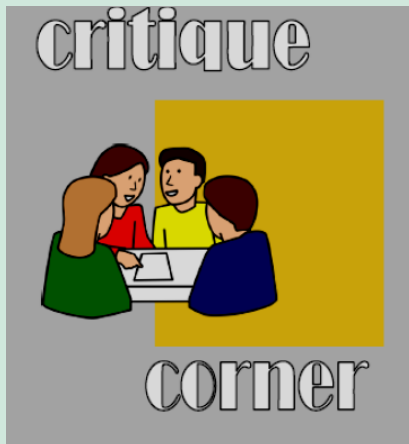
If you write in this genre, strive to coordinate the elements of your drama - plot, setting, characters. Put color on the pages; immerse your readers in your characters' time and place. Make a true event as intriguing as a fictional adventure—or a Debra Tash historical fiction story.

-Kathy Highcove



photo by  
Ester Benjamin Shifren

# THAT'S HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN



I definitely am not a fan of snakes, but in a book I'm reading by Pat Schneider – *How the Light Gets In* – she used an image that stuck with me. It was: "... a desert snake side-winding his way toward his destination. If he takes a straight line, he can't get there."

What could that have to do with writing? For me, a lot, and I'd love to know your thoughts on it as a metaphor for writing, too. "Side-winding" is the editing and rewrites we need to make before we can get to our destination – our best writing. My "straight line" would be getting through that first draft and saying, "It's done!" Not so. Not yet. By reading it over many times, both aloud and silently, we

realize that changes are necessary. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was known also for still wanting to edit his already published works.

Schneider, who teaches writing at UC Berkeley, also gives light to why we start our CWC meetings writing from Prompts. She urges, "Take whatever comes," I tell my workshop participants. "Whatever image, whatever words. When you begin to write, take what first flashes into your mind, because it is a gift from your unconscious."

Another gift is to hear from other writers what struck them as important in your story; what suggestions might make it even a stronger description or statement, and so forth. We grow stronger in our work and in ourselves when receiving advice and back-up from others who're willing to share ideas.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "Many ideas grow better when transplanted into another mind than the one where they sprang up." This is what critique group teams are all about.

**This is *how the light gets in*.**

I value my critique team in the highest way. Each person has different perspectives to offer. I gain such insightful comments from them and their support is always there. I don't feel I must use every suggestion they make. If their suggestion doesn't quite fit what I wanted to say, that tells me I need to rewrite that part to make it clearer to the reader. An interesting bit of "light" comes through to me in their every word.

—Rita Keeley Brown



When you reach the editing stage, it is often the case that you can get too involved with the story to detect errors. You can see words in your head that aren't actually there on the page, sentences blur together and errors escape you, and you follow plot threads and see only the images in your skull.

From Brainy Quotes—Neal Asher

# VENTURA COUNTY WRITERS CLUB

## 19th Annual Short Story Contest

Due to fires and power outages:  
**EXTENDED SUBMISSION DATES**  
Enter until December 15, 2019  
11: 59 PM PST.

### Cash Prizes:

#### Adult

**First – \$350**

**Second – \$150**

**Third – \$75**

*Winners will be notified in early February, 2020. Award Ceremony will be held on February 11, 2020.*

*Winning stories will be published in the upcoming VCWC Anthology.*

More Questions? Email Chair at

[shortstorycontest@venturacountywriters.com](mailto:shortstorycontest@venturacountywriters.com)

### Contest Rules

Multiple entries welcomed. All must be family friendly, original and previously unpublished. Published means appearing in any newspaper, magazine, or book, whether or not the author received compensation. Self-published and e-published works are prohibited. Entrants may receive only one cash prize. First place winners from the last three years are not eligible.

Fees per story: Adult VCWC members, \$15 U.S.; Adult non-members, \$25 U.S.; and high school students, \$10. PayPal, credit or debit cards are accepted

### Format & Presentation

- **Word Limit: 2,500 words** (approximately ten double-spaced pages) or fewer.
- Save the document as a Microsoft Word or PDF file.
- Page size: 8.5 inches x 11 inches. Margins: 1 inch, top, bottom, and sides.
- Font style and size: Times New Roman or Courier, 12 point.
- Title and number each page at the top right corner.
- Double space. Indent the first line of each paragraph.
- No illustrations or photographs.
- To ensure anonymous judging, **do not** put the author's name anywhere within the manuscript. The author's name, contact information, and a brief bio are required as part of a submitter's registration. This information is accessible *only* to the contest administrator. Finalists will be asked to provide a publicity head shot.

- **IMPORTANT:** The most frequent reason for disqualification is a name appearing on the actual manuscript.

- **Please tell us how you learned of our contest.**

### Submission

- **On-line entries only** through user-friendly **com.** Our entry period has been extended to **midnight, December 15th** Winners will be notified in **early Feb.** Award ceremony on **Feb. 11th.**
- **Please note that by entering our contest, you grant the Ventura County Writers Club one-time, non-exclusive publication rights to your winning entry to be published in our biannual anthology and in our newsletter The Write Stuff, as well as temporary hosting or linking on VCWC's website, [www.venturacountywriters.com](http://www.venturacountywriters.com),**

### Judging Criteria

- Audience appropriateness, plot, character development, intent/focus, reader interest, style/voice, grammar/ punctuation, presentation, and title.
- All decisions are final. No submissions will be returned.

**Entries not conforming to contest rules will not be judged.**



# AS THE ROSE GROWS

Song lyrics by Michael Rains



Sometimes great things  
come from very tiny places  
Sometimes wonders  
spring up from a measly speck

Sometimes you  
never can tell  
where it came from

Sometimes roses  
grow on gravestones

Sometimes beauty  
is just ugly that kept growing  
In the ground where  
nobody's ever going to find it

Sometimes life's  
not about staying alive

When the shell dies  
see what's inside

See the pretty colors  
of the rose

It smells so graceful

Does it mean a thing  
Does anything in this world  
Where do roses  
get those colors  
Maybe bought with diamonds  
Maybe kings ground up all their  
crowns  
Maybe a thousand poets screamed  
loud

Wearing royal grave clothes  
of what was there before  
Now as the rose grows  
Death's silence has spoken  
Grave's never is turned to  
Always, always!

Strange aroma  
Never quite can  
Understand its name  
Never the same



The seed's blood  
the colors of the  
rose  
Sings of this love that kissed death

Love stern as death  
As the rose grows

Eternal embrace  
As the rose grows

Oh, a sweet aroma  
Warm as the ground is cold

Who truly knows  
How was love shown  
As the rose grows  
As the rose grows

Wise men and greater ones  
wonder and fade

Can the world contain the secrets hidden here  
As the rose grows  
As the rose grows



## *Girl Reading A Book*

by *Kęstę Birmberg-Goldstein*

From the window Klara sees the old carved furniture, dragged without finesse into a waiting van.

Faded velvet curtains folded with old dust cover the piano, and what looks like...the massive family credenza carved in dark wood with its dangling heavy-metal Spanish-large-pulls. Two men go two steps forward and two steps back, dragging the long Colonial table and long straight-back chairs replicas of the museum pieces shown at The Museum of Colonial Art, Quito. The men are forcing the furniture to fit out of the front portico doors.

Everything in the house is dark and old...but Klara likes it all, especially the paintings, and the ancient soiled leather-covered books lining walls from the floor going way up, almost like-bending the ceiling. She reads on the sneak 'forbidden-to-read' Mother's books when nobody is looking. Where have the movers put all of these? She sees them going back and forth with heavy sealed boxes.

Her heart skips when she sees the empty walls where the paintings used to be. Her brother Salem said they were replicas of the old masters and made her memorize so many of them like Renoir, Rembrandt, Modigliani, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Murillo, and others. But Klara is not interested in all those names. Her favorite, Fragonard's *Girl Reading A Book* is also missing. Different size dust frames vacated by the paintings makes her worry that they're been taken away, and her eyes fill with tears. She is not allowed to ask questions...nobody seems to care. Her family did not talk about things, especially to children. Whispered voices always pushed into closets...that slowly turned into skeletons behind closed doors.

She runs to her mother's room and sees her reshaping her lips with outlines of red, leaving the imprint of her mouth...like a perfect 'M' on a crumpled linen napkin. Her empty china dishes dusted with toast crumbs... rests on

the carved silver tray lined with a delicate lacey-ecru-doily. This is no time to ask questions. Her mother seems pre-occupied with her appearance; things must be normal, running smoothly. She has probably convinced Dad to move again to a new rented house...Leaving Klara's memories tied into a bundle waiting to be stored in a new splinter of her brain.

Without being noticed, she flattens her body against the wall, steps out of her mother's room backwards and slides down the banister to the lower floor. She sees furniture movers, house cleaners, or whoever they are, EATING! Leaving white dot crumbs all around. She is in the patio now hiding behind tall palms growing out of giant clay pots, shadowing her presence.

Her father's voice thunders. He is holding his Talit and Hebrew book under his arm. It must be Friday night already.

"There you are...we must learn to count our blessings one by one," he says. "No more moving again. Your mother 'ordered' me to send everything into storage, until all draperies are cleaned, walls painted and repairs done."

Holding her hand, Father drags Klara back into the house. Nothing has changed. The long table is covered by the Shabbat tablecloth, chalah, wine, and candlesticks. The Hanukah Menorah is shining bright. On her toes she slides a kiss on her father's cheek. Running with delight, she goes directly to the replica gallery. There she is, *Girl Reading A Book*. Tears brim in her eyes blurring the image.

The ritual starts. Every night she pretends going inside the painting, wearing the bright yellow dress with the frilly gauze white collar, eyes looking down... Klara starts reading the opened book. Her waking nightmare is the only thing that's disappeared.



*What we remember from childhood we remember forever-permanent ghosts, stamped, imprinted, eternally seen.*

- Cynthia Ozick

# KDP SELECT

## Learning to Use Kindle Marketing



**Gabriella Owens**

When I published my first book, **BBQ Pizza**, in 2013, I didn't make it exclusive to Amazon's Kindle. Both the paperback and the e-book went out through multiple distributors. In the Fall of 2018, I published a small

eBook of three short stories exclusively through Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) and so enrolled that in their KDP SELECT program. This action made the book available for free reading to anyone enrolled in the Kindle Unlimited program (giving me a few pennies per read) and allowed me to create a special marketing program every quarter to attract buyers.

After my second book had been on KDP SELECT for a time, it occurred to me that my first book wasn't selling anything much through the non-KDP distributors. So, I decided to remove my first book from those distributors and try it exclusively on KDP SELECT. After the switch my sales of the older book did pick up slightly, but not significantly. I thought this was due to mistakes in how I used their free marketing tools. For the first quarter, I tried a "countdown" deal, where the price starts out low and then grows (first three days at \$0.99, then three days at \$1.99 etc.) until reaching full price again. This did not generate any sales above the previous years for that period.

The next quarter, I tried using KDP SELECT'S five free days instead of a countdown deal. I scattered the free days as one day one month, two days another and so on. My thinking was that it would help keep my book in a higher level of results when people searched for BBQ Pizza. Each time it was free I had fifty to one hundred downloads. This time my paid sales picked up slightly, but not significantly.

In August, my third quarter in the KDP SELECT program, I was busy with visiting grandkids and travelling. So, I just plunked down five free

days all at once. This seemed to be the way to go.

In those five days I had over one THOUSAND free downloads plus a dozen Kindle Unlimited reads. What that did was to move my book up significantly in the Amazon rankings.

Ranking before five consecutive free days:

**Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #2,513,710**  
**Paid in Kindle Store**  
**#1490 in Outdoor Cooking**  
**#2100 in Humor, Cooking**  
**#2517 in Barbecuing & Grilling**

Ranking after five consecutive free days:

**Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #537,925 Paid**  
**in Kindle Store**  
**#647 in Barbecuing & Grilling**  
**#657 in Cooking Humor**  
**#304 in Outdoor Cooking**

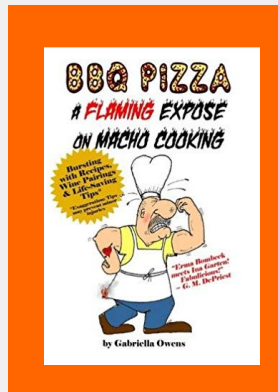
Because my book was now coming up in the first few pages of search results in these categories, my paid sales, both for e-book and paperback, increased in the weeks following the free period. Two dozen sales more than I would normally see.

I believe I also chose the right weekly timing of the five free days. The highest e-book buying days on Amazon are on the weekend. I started my free days on a Thursday. The first two days had just over one hundred downloads each. This was enough to move my book up in the free rankings so that on Saturday, the busiest e-book shopping day, my book was in the first few pages of results. Seven hundred and seventy-nine people downloaded BBQ Pizza on that one day!

It seemed the most effective use of the KDP SELECT marketing tools was to use the five free days all at once starting on a Wednesday or Thursday. For this quarter I tried the weekend before Thanksgiving. For the five free days I had a whopping total of forty-one downloads. So, all my theories need rethinking. Luck may be just as important in skill where marketing is concerned.

I hope all of you are successful with your book sales!

-Gabriella Owens





## ONE WINTER NIGHT 1944

*By Sam Glenn*

Dad's working late tonight. At the Navy Department.  
Mom fixes supper for me and her. Grilled SPAM, green peas and tomato soup.  
We're done.

She shows me an air-mail letter from my Uncle Roy.  
She dabs her eyes with her napkin.

Uncle Roy's on a ship somewhere in the Pacific Ocean.  
Thick black lines cover up some of the words. Mom says it's 'cause of the censors.  
That's their job.

It'll be Christmas soon. Don't know how Santa Claus gets in our apartment.  
We're on the second floor. We don't have a chimney and fireplace.  
We don't have a car. I walk to school. We walk to church.

A small stack of old newspapers and magazines sits by the front door.  
Tied up with twine. For me to take to school.  
My third grade class is collecting papers for the war effort.  
It's cold outside and snowing.. Good for sledding 'cept I don't have a sled.  
They don't make sleds now. Need steel for the War.

But Saturday maybe I'll build an igloo.  
I'll use Mom's bread pans to make snow bricks.  
And I'll make a snowman. Gotta have a snowman.

I sit beside Mom on the sofa.

She listens to the radio. The Third Army advances somewhere.

I lay my head down on her lap.

... and Donner and Blitzen ...

... and to all a goodnight.

# Fundraising for CWC-SFV



**M**embership in CWC-SFV provides you with high quality speakers, access to critique groups and the camaraderie of fellow writers. Our costs have been rising but we have maintained the membership fees at the same level. Help us balance the budget by participating in our book sale and at the same time snag bargains on books to gift or keep for yourself.

At our December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting we will be selling the following:

- Speakers' books written by our previous speakers priced at \$10.
- The CWC-SFV Anthology priced at \$10
- CWC-SFV Authors selling their books and giving a portion of their sales to CWC-SFV. Authors interested in selling your books must register with Bob Okowitz ([apthealth@gmail.com](mailto:apthealth@gmail.com)) to reserve a slot. Once slots are filled you may request a slot for a subsequent month. Space will be limited to only 4 authors so reserve early
- Unwrapped "like new" books priced at \$5 or more
- Take a Chance! "Like new" books wrapped to surprise you with the contents. Genre will be noted with the package priced at \$1.

Be sure to bring cash or checks and do some serious shopping to ensure that the high-quality programming we offer can continue.

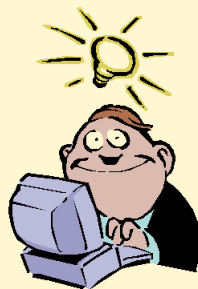
—Patricia Avery

## Impromptu Writing - Try It, You'll Like it!

**A**s you might have noted, our meetings begin when SFV member, Rita Keeley Brown, leads us in a **writing prompt exercise**. An effective prompt—a single word, a short phrase, a paragraph, or even a picture, photo, or musical refrain—can be a catalyst for your creative inspiration.

When a writer hears or reads an interesting prompt, an idea may take seed and bloom into a composition. The composition's length, spelling or grammar standards are ignored during a prompt "reaction." Once inspiration hits and the words start to flow, anything goes. Rita usually gives the group **ten minutes** to jot down a response to a one of four prompts.

While working alone at home, a writer should consider using writing prompts to kick-start his or



her imagination. If you Google the phrase, you'll easily find writing prompt pages online.

Thanks to Rita Keeley Brown's efforts and leadership, our writers' club currently begins every meeting with this exercise. Nearly every attendee tries this exercise. Why? Probably because it's fun.

No one HAS to do the exercise. Rita won't grade your paper. The only reaction you'll receive from our group—if you read your composition aloud—will be smiles and applause. And maybe, after you return home, the short prompt composition will inspire your next story, poem, memoir or book.

On the next two pages, you'll see prompt responses written by members during our November meeting. Enjoy.

—Kathy Highcove

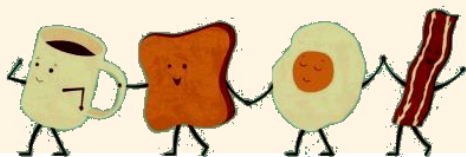
**Prompt:** Write a Thank You note to an inanimate object you use all the time, but take for granted.

## Ode to a Spatula



I have known you for so long a time  
Ever since I was a bachelor  
Now that I celebrate you in rhyme  
Thank you, kudos, my dear spatula  
You deserve the highest honor  
You above my proudest implements  
Have made my odious frenzy calmer  
Dearest hand mate, my compliments  
I admire your steadfast cool  
Starting my day, at the pan  
My most admirable tool  
Creating breakfast, as best you can  
Never are you show-offy  
Neither looking down your nose  
Right then before coffee  
In your plastic manly pose  
Without you, there'd be no scramble  
It's as good as it can get  
As in my pajamas, I shamble  
Holding you in my grip, dear, dear pet  
I know well, that you enjoy  
My quick flip of the wrist  
Utilitarian, not a toy  
Sitting in my tight held fist  
As we pitch, perfect to the dish  
Eggs over easy, bacon, toast  
What more could one wish?  
You my utensil. are the most  
Abiding in the tool drawer, singular  
Standing by for duty, spectacular  
I doff my cap, don my scapular  
Bend a knee to you, devoted spatula

-Michael Edelstein



## Dear Blender

It occurred to me that you wake up and kick into your whirling frenetic speed every morning, without a good morning salutation or even a tender fondle from me. I throw all sorts of organic items in various stages of decay into your open four walls and stab at the illuminated buttons on your chest plate.

Your cry is as loud and shrill as the most intense cries of a bound prisoner under hideous torture. I've come to be indifferent to that as well. Forgive me. You grind and blend and whip my fruits and veggies, protein powder and coconut milk with an accuracy for perfect texture and emulsion. I can start my day because you are so committed, despite the wear and tear on your parts.

Sometimes I have the respect to wash you out with soapy water. Other times you are left tilting in the sink with the morning's maelstrom permanently affixing to your sides. I apologize for my sleepy indifference to your best interest as I am without civility at that hour.

You remain steady and dedicated, holding your appliance warranty well among the other fixtures on the kitchen counter vying for my attention to bake sticky frosted cinnamon buns.

So I offer you a long overdue thanks for allowing me to seek healthy eating at the start of my day. Beware though, I don't know how long this uncharacteristic discipline will last. You may soon find yourself filled with chocolate mint chip ice cream, milk and chocolate syrup and asked to whirl up a 'medicinal blend' for what ails me that morning!

With sincerest appreciation and transparency.

-Anne W. Lee



## Prompt: He smiled at me as if he knew ...



**Nance Crawford, back in the day,  
belting out a song.**

## Prompt:

**Write a Thank You note FROM  
an inanimate object who feels  
taken for granted.**

### The Know-It-All

**H**e smiled as if he knew the future. My future. Like hell.  
We were at the Palamino Club, home of country music in North Hollywood.

I can't even remember what I had thanked him for. A song suggestion? Help in something – getting onstage?

How had I said it? “Thanks for ... ?” Doesn't matter. He was a manager of singers, a local guy old enough to have dodged bullets on Iwo Jima – my Dad's age, at least.

He responded to my, “Don't know how to thank you,” with a smarmy grin and, “Oh, you will.”

He was just another dirty old man.

I had had lots of experience with “Me, Too,” but we didn't call it that, back then.

I stared him down, turned, and went on to bump into tomorrow.

-Nance Crawford

### The Last Word from a Cell

**W**ell, well, she's finally noticing me. It's not that I'm a wallflower although my cover is decorated with many colorful flowers. I do admit that my owner Sarah does have good taste. It's a good thing that I don't hold grudges. It's just that I hate going ignored and taken for granted ,, Hmm, I think she's found me.

“There you are hiding under the newspaper!” cried Sarah.

Why would I hide when I really want to be found?

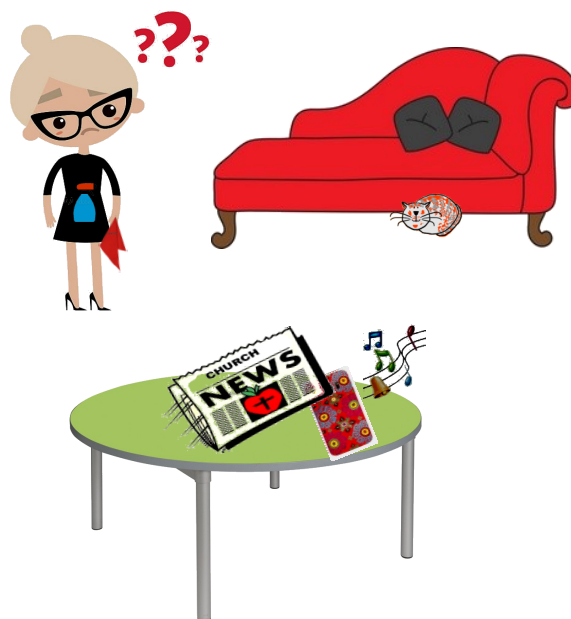
She carefully picks me up and squirts some cleaning solution on a soft red cloth

How refreshing! Why did it take her so long to perform this wondrous deed?

Should I say ‘Thank you’?

Not on your life!

-Sheila Moss



## CWC-SFV Board & Coordinators

President  
Bob Okowitz  
[apthealth@gmail.com](mailto:apthealth@gmail.com)

Vice-President  
Nance Crawford  
[Nance@NanceCrawford.com](mailto:Nance@NanceCrawford.com)

Secretary and Treasurer  
Pat Avery  
[rpavery@mac.com](mailto:rpavery@mac.com)

Programs  
Lori Hamilton  
[lorecaha@verizon.net](mailto:lorecaha@verizon.net)

Membership  
Andrea Polk  
[andipolk4@gmail.com](mailto:andipolk4@gmail.com)

Webmaster  
Michael Rains  
[Opie\\_rains@yahoo.com](mailto:Opie_rains@yahoo.com)

Critique Group Coordinator  
Jenny Jordan  
[Jennyjordan2@gmail.com](mailto:Jennyjordan2@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editor  
Katherine Highcove  
[kghighcove@gmail.com](mailto:kghighcove@gmail.com)

Audio Visual Consultant  
Monte D. Swann  
[cygnetvideo@gmail.com](mailto:cygnetvideo@gmail.com)

Drop in on our next  
meeting at 1 pm,  
on Dec. 7th, at the MPTF.  
You'll find the us at  
23388 Mulholland Drive  
Woodland Hills, CA. 91364



At the Saban Center  
for Health and Wellness



In the  
Community Room

photo by Ester Benjamin Shifren