

INK SPOTS

The Newsletter of the Fremont Area Writers, A Part of the California Writer's Club
Jay Swartz, Editor (triloci@hotmail.com)

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FAW Joins CWC!

Now that we have hit a major membership milestone of 30 paid members, the Fremont Area Writers group has joined the California Writer's Club. Created by Jack London and several of his friends, the CWC has become a terrific resource for California writers.

Shortly after we organized the Fremont Area Writers back in March 2008, the Central Board changed the minimum numbers of members that a new branch would

need to receive its charter. They raised the number from 15 to 30. This past April, FAW President Bob Garfinkle met with CWC President Casey Wilson and then New Branch Development Chair, Allene Symons to go over our membership list. At that time, we had about 17 members, but had not collected any dues. We agreed that FAW would try to get its charter at the July meeting if we could meet the 30 members number. We were close at 24 and I was able to get the Central

Board to accept us being that we should have been allowed to charter with 15. The vote was 16 with one abstention. Thus, on July 19, 2009 the Fremont Area Writers became the 18th branch of CWC.

We have joined up with a large and lively community. For more information about the California Writers Club, check out their website at <http://www.calwriters.org/>.

"Catch"ing up with Recent Publications

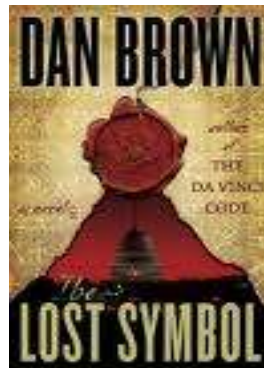
Food does indeed rule as readers look to Michael Pollan's *Food Rules* for eating advice.

The Catcher in the Rye makes another appearance on the Bestseller list in the wake of J. D. Salinger's death. Only seventy-five years left until the movie gets made!

Newcomer Kathryn Stockett's story of racial activism, *The Help*, continues to enthrall readers and Rebecca Skloot's incredible tale of family and medicine puts her on the list

this month as well.

Rounding out the list are a couple of tell-all political books relating the ever-amusing antics of our leaders.



Bestsellers

Food Rules
Michael Pollan

The Help
Kathryn Stockett

Game Change
Heilemann & Halperin

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Slacks
Rebecca Skloot

The Politician
Andrew Young

The Catcher in the Rye
J. D. Salinger

Also Published:

- ***I Am Ozzy***
Ozzy Osbourne
- ***The Lost Symbol***
Dan Brown
- ***The Frozen Rabbi***
Steve Stern
- ***Going Rogue***
Sarah Palin

Deal Yourself a Hero's Journey

Having trouble getting started? Get a head start by prompting yourself with a few characters and places.

Because the Tarot deck is a set of universal symbols, it can be easily adapted as a writing tool. In fact, the 22 cards of the Major Arcana (or Trumps) of the Tarot deck closely parallel the Hero's Journey as defined by Joseph Campbell.

I know, I know – the Tarot Deck!? You probably think of it as bizarre, surreal, maybe even devilish. However, it has an elegant structure that lends itself perfectly to storytelling. The cards represent

things we encounter in our daily lives, people we have to deal with, situations we have to get through and ways in which we express ourselves.

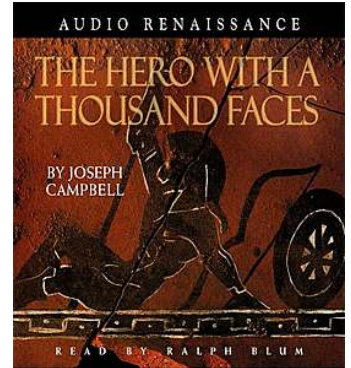
Traditionally, the Tarot has been a set of esoteric symbols. They had their own language and you need to learn that language or have an interpreter (reader) explain it for you. This misappropriates the intention of the Tarot.

The Tarot should be a set of symbols that everyone immediately understands. Even with most modern decks' stylized symbol sets, the underlying meanings of the cards remain rele-

vant. They address themes familiar to us all: Love, Sacrifice, Death, Change, Money etc.

As an example, one day I pulled six cards – three for events and three for people, and wrote a story based on it. The cards were The Hermit (Time), The Star (An Angel), The Devil (A Fearsome or Violent Person), the Lovers (Choice), Lust (Temptation), The Tower (Revelation). I took the simplest meanings of the words and put them into a short story.

(Read the story below! Can you find the archetypes?)



The Tarot deck closely parallels the Hero's Journey as defined by Joseph Campbell.

Getting an Orange

The door whooshed open and Garry stepped inside the store double time. He took four steps and stopped dead, shuffling his feet, bladder aching.

A sharp intake of breath as Garry took in his surroundings even as his bladder twinged again and the urge to move – simply move – was nearly overwhelming.

Row upon row of aisles stretched away from him in each direction like a secret government installation.

(Cont. next Page)

Garry glanced over his shoulder. The only other option was to leave the building and try to find somewhere else. All the stores in this shopping center were at least as big as this one and the restaurants were a half mile away at the other end. No. He looked up the aisles in front of him. He looked to his left, to his right. A single step down the wrong aisle could cost him dearly. A childhood rhyme drifted through his mind:

*How dry I am
How wet I'll be
If I don't find
The bathroom key*

"Can I help you?" said a bubbly voice. Garry turned. A beautiful cinnamon-skinned store clerk beamed at him from mocha eyes. Her perfect raven hair settled into place as she smiled at Garry like a cheerleader.

"Where's the bathroom?" Garry asked, stifling another gasp.

"Ooh, that's in the real far back of the store, I'm afraid. You just go right down there about 3...4..." she counted, wiggling her fingers. "...13, 14, 15, 16...about..."

How dry I am

"...16, 17 aisles, make a left, go through misses, junior misses, preteens, tweens, bweens, and milfs & dilfs.

Then make a right when you come to the bras, go *all* the way –"

How wet I'll be

"...to the very end, that's...aisle 117, I believe, which is entirely filled with different flavors of Cheerios. Then, you make another left, go through the double doors on the right –"

If I don't find

"dash up the stairs –" she walked her fingers in front of Garry's nose – "and there you are –"

The bathroom key

"...third, fourth, fifth door the right. Off you go!" And she gave Garry a little slap on the bottom that almost made him let go right there. For a split second did feel a spreading warmth; a moment later he sucked it up and dashed down the main aisle as the beautiful clerk called "I hope you make it!"

Garry entered the produce department at a dead run. That's probably why he didn't see the 6'-5", 350-pound man dressed in a bright red store apron.

Garry ran right into him with a whoof, the wind knocked out of him. His bladder sloshed uncomfortably and Garry again imagined a spreading

warmth, this time accompanied by the taste of urine.



"H-heeyyyy, there buddy!" the giant exclaimed, reaching out a beefy hand to help Garry to his feet. Garry started off again, but the giant stopped him with his bear's arm. The second half of that childhood rhyme floated by:

*I found the key
I opened the door
But it's too late
It's on the floor*

"Jesus, man –" Garry started, but the giant was already into a sales pitch.

"**Have** you evah **seen** such fi-i-i-ahine pahhhhroduce, suh?!" he nearly shouted. "Why, on over heeah we haive such faihne, suh-hweet oranges... here, try one." And he leaned forward, leering, and thrust a huge orange into Garry's face, his sweaty face only inches from Garry's. Droplets of sweat stood in relief on his face. Garry's need started to become sore. A distant pain marched closer. The giant nonchalantly wiped the sweat with a hand towel. "They're a great way to hydrate!" He shoved it right

up under Garry's nose. The aroma of orange mixed with the sourness in his mouth almost made him hurl. His bladder screamed.

"Get out of my way, you idiot behemoth!" Garry bellowed, and he pushed the giant out of his way. Or tried to. Garry's hands just sank into the giant's flesh, but he didn't budge. He looked stupidly down at Garry's hands, then back up to his face. Garry snatched his hands away. "Sorry –" he began.

"Did you just assault me? Did you, a customer, just assault me?"

How dry I am

"We don't allow that sort of behavior – suh," the giant said with gleeful menace. "I'm going to have to take you ... to the manager."

"No!" Garry shouted. "There's no need for that!"

How wet I'll be

The giant rested a table-sized hand heavily on Garry's shoulder, driving him back. "Sit," the giant said, pushing Garry down onto a bench.

*If I don't find
The bathroom key*

"Aww....don't make me sit!" Garry whined. "I just gotta take a piss real bad!"

he finished in a desperate whisper.

I found the key

The giant furrowed his brow, almost in thought, then shrugged and pulled a two-way radio from his hip. "Sparrow Three to nest," he snapped. "Sparrow Three to nest." The radio crackled. The giant shook it. "Sparrow Three to nest." He shook again and glared at it.

*I opened the door
But it's too late*

Gesturing to the towering shelves that dwarfed even him, he said, "No reception back here." He leveled a finger. "Don't go anywhere." And amazingly, he walked down the aisle, around a corner and out of sight. Garry grit his teeth and immediately jumped up

It's on the floor

his bladder shifting painfully and ran off.

* * *

He found the double doors and started up the stairs, thinking of the cute clerk walking her fingers under his nose. Finally he stood outside the men's room door. He rushed forward, pushing the door open. It didn't budge. He rose involuntarily to his toes in shock and dismay.

Closed sign! Locked door! "No!" Garry cried out involuntarily.

Did he just dribble a little? He pounded on the door in frustration. He looked down the row of doors to his right, down the row of doors to his left. A trash can in a far corner called to him in a low rumbling voice. "I may be in plain sight, but I can hold all your trash." Garry shook his head. Reluctantly, he eyed the door to the women's bathroom. "Hope it's a single..." he muttered.

But it was a standard women's restroom, long rows of stalls beyond a bank of sinks and mirrors, no urinals. In his state he didn't notice the filthy condition of the bathroom, the graffiti-ravaged walls or the slime in the grout. He did notice that no one was at the sinks, but someone was in the midst of peeing three stalls from the left. Garry put his head down and scuttled forward like he was avoiding mines in the rain.

He finally dashed into a stall. Forgetting even to shut the door, he whipped down his pants and stood there, ass to the wind, waiting to pee. And waiting. GOGOGO! Garry force-thought at his bladder. But nothing came. Feeling as

though he might faint, he finally felt the release as some internal valves opened and some closed and his bladder let go. And say “Hallelujah!” the stream flowed.

Some time later, the stream still emptying into the sea, Garry opened his eyes. Directly in front of him on the wall someone had written:

“And the circle shall set you free.”

-R. Hermitage

Garry read it, then read it again. He thought of circles and round things. The circular toilet, the rough circularity of his stream. The chubby round face of the pushy produce giant floated by. He still held the huge orange, and it filled Garry’s vision, growing larger and larger.

Someone flushed in the stall next to him and his eyes snapped open. An orange sounded so fantastic about now Garry nearly said it aloud before remembering he was in a women’s bathroom with his bare ass hanging out in front of an open door. “Shit!” he whispered.

The stream dried up. Without bothering to shake, he hastily bent down to pull up his pants. He could hear the woman in the next stall

fumbling with her clothes and an erotic thrill momentarily jolted him. As she bent to pull up her skirt he realized she would walk right by his open stall door in just a few seconds. Panic overtook him for one horrified moment and time slowed to a crawl. He was facing the wrong way! He had to turn around, get out of there! She couldn’t possibly see him, could she?

He heard the click of her stall door opening and quickly thrust his butt against the door to whack it shut as she went by. He drew his left foot up and tried to wedge his butt tightly against the door but he couldn’t quite get the leverage. He stood there, butt to the door, one foot on the toilet bowl as her high-heels clip-clacked to the sinks. She turned on the water.

Garry breathed a sigh of relief and slowly let his left foot back down to the ground as silently as possible. Thinking about how loud his stream must have sounded, he quietly – quietly – rose slowly, pulling his pants fully on. He zipped slowly, agonizingly slowly. He heard the water running. He slowly stuck his head out of the stall and looked toward the door and the sinks. He could just see the outline

of her body, her curving bottom, her shapely legs. She turned off the water. Garry started to step out but she didn’t leave; instead, she started rummaging in her purse.

A slight click was all the warning Garry had as the bathroom door opened. He drew back quickly, shutting and locking the stall door. He listened to the new arrival make her way to a stall, shut and lock her door. He poked his head out again.

The woman at the front finished touching up her makeup. Satisfied, she dropped her eyeliner into her purse and left the bathroom. Sighing with relief, Garry stepped into the aisle. A toilet flushed behind him and all the previous panic welled up in Garry like a hungry rampaging bear. Heart rushing, he threw himself forward. He heard a tinkle of accessories and the soft slide of clothing on skin



as the woman put herself back together. She would emerge in just a second or two.

Garry was at the door in two leaping strides, out the bathroom and down the stairs before he remembered to breathe. He punched through the double doors with the greatest sense of relief he had ever felt, his hammering heart slowly subsiding.

He stood there, heaving, in front of a giant, larger-than-life cardboard cutout of Shaylee Simon, the latest pop tart sensation, all spanglely bangles and cascading blonde extensions, hip outthrust in a quasi-pornographic pose. Leaning over as he was, his eyes fixed upon her young breasts.

“Hey!” someone shouted. “HEY! You there!”

Oh no. He turned slowly to his right, still bent nearly double from heaving. He placed a casual hand on Shaylee’s round butt to steady himself.

The giant had found him.

With him stood a woman so absurdly thin and so absurdly old that Garry could do nothing but gape.

“Is that him?” the old woman scratched. She carried a long orange strap, a tie-down from the warehouse, which she snapped threateningly like a whip.

The giant’s eyes narrowed and he pressed his hands together greedily. He nodded. “That’s him, Mathilda!” They started forward.

Garry broke his paralysis, snatching his hand from Shaylee’s ass as he ran to his left. He heard a snap-crack! as Mathilda flicked her whip at him. He put on a burst of speed but it zinged him on the ankle and he stumbled. “Oooh, good, Tillie!” the giant squealed. Garry scrambled forward on feet and hands like an ape, lurching back into a run.

He rounded a corner, then another, trying to befuddle them in their own territory. He skipped an aisle, then ran past the eyewear.

Suddenly Mathilda stood in front of him, three aisles away. “Aisle 147!” she shouted, and he heard it echo out of the giant’s radio, a few aisles away behind him.

He turned into the shoe department and for a few seconds the only sound he heard was the slap of foot upon tile.

Then someone grabbed him, pulled him into an alcove. Garry stumbled, trying to run and fight at the same time. “Relax!” said the smiling, jovial cheerleader. “Come on!” She took his

hand and led him through the back of the alcove into a deserted corridor. “Those guys are such assholes!” she said, still smiling.

Garry collapsed in a heap. “Wow! Thanks!” he said gratefully. “What a crazy store!”

“I know!” she said. “It’s a real bitch working here. Most of the employees are mean and petty, like Tillie and the Gerb.”

“The Gerb?”

“The Gerbil. It’s what we call him. His name’s really Hamilton Turnbull, but some of us, we made it, you know, Hamster Gerbil.”

“Hmm...” Garry said. “It actually kind of fits.”

“Yeah. Funny, huh?” They looked at each other and burst out laughing.

“I’m Garry.” He held out his hand.

“Samila.” They looked into each other’s eyes as their hands met, and both liked what they saw.

“Do you have to get back?” Garry asked, standing.


“Thankfully, no I just got off my shift.” She smiled dazzlingly.

“Well, I was thinking about getting an orange,” Garry said ruefully, “But I don’t think it would be a good idea for me to go out there just now.” A crash and a thump reached their ears as

Tillie and the Gerb thrashed around in their continued search.

“An orange,” Samila said thoughtfully. “I love oranges!” And she opened her purse and pulled out a juicy-looking specimen. “Shall we? I’ll take you out the back way.” She winked.

The sun was setting as they left the store by a little-used side door, arm-in-arm. Silhouetted in orange light, Samila leaned over and stole a kiss.

And the orange was sweet, and the sunset was gorgeous. 

Members Publish!

Myrla Raymundo

Union City Historical Museum Oral History Book

Myrla’s book offers a snapshot of the lives of many of Union City’s early settlers and the hardships they faced as they shaped Union City.

Jeannine Vegh

The Uprisers - A Hungarian Historical Fiction

A young woman comes of age in this sweeping epic set during the Hungarian revolution of 1956.



Killer Crutches

A crutch does the work – so you don’t have to! Killer Crutches focuses on words and figures of speech that kill your writing. This month: To be verbs.

Back in high school, my eleventh-grade English teacher, Jim Bradley, would deduct points based on how many times I used a “to be” verb in my writing assignments. You may consider that harsh; I regarded it as a challenge that I continue to this day.

Be. Is. Am. Was. Were. Been. Being. Becoming. Seem and Feel.

Simple, small words. They entice and entrap you. But don’t be fooled by these literary will-o’-the-wisps. They’ll lead you off the

proverbial cliff. Of course, you don’t need to apply the rules stringently when writing dialogue or for stylistic effect.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Jim Bradley. He gave me one of the most important foundations of my writing.

Look at something you’ve written recently. Circle all the “to be” verbs. Now see if you can rewrite it without those deceptively helpful killer crutch verbs. Which version is better?

Get in there with your red pen and get the “be” out!

(Next Month: The Evil Triplets Have, Has and Had.)

2010 NorCal Writers Retreat

Join us at the secluded Pema Osel Ling (Lotus Land of Clear Lake) Retreat Center in the picturesque Santa Cruz Mountains from April 5-7. Alice Wilson Fried, a member of CWC Berkeley Branch, an award-winning novelist and inspiring instructor in the art and craft of writing, will facilitate the workshop along with Master Storyteller Luisah Teish, a member of CWC Peninsula Branch, who invites you to tune into the environment of Pema Osel Ling in her workshop on Eco-Myth.

Get your creative juices flowing! For more information contact Dale King, Retreat Coordinator, at deking8@msn.com.

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Your FAW Officers

President - Robert Garfinkle
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Bob has published reviews, articles and short stories. He is the author of the best-selling astronomy book *Star-Hopping*. In 2009, Bob received Jack London Award for outstanding service to the CWC.

Vice President – Jim Stewart
james.stewart4@comcast.net



Jim Stewart, BSEE and Master of Arts in Business Administration, has worked as an integrated circuit design manager and technical writer for many years. He is currently writing his first novel.

Treasurer – Carol Hall
cahall@rocketmail.com



Carol has been a freelance writer for eleven years. She writes novels, screenplays and a blog. As an eBay Trading Assistant, she also helps others sell on eBay.

Secretary – Myrla Raymundo
ligfinio.raymundo@sbcglobal.net



Myrla founded the Union City Historical Museum. She writes and edits numerous newsletters in addition to her column in the *Tri-City Voice*. She just published her latest book, *Union City Oral History*.

Message from the President

The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do.

– Thomas Jefferson

Now that we are the 18th branch of the CWC, it's time to get organized! We have revived our newsletter with Jay Swartz taking over the editorship and Ameena Saeed, Myrla Raymundo, and Evelyn LaTorre assisting. It's up to all of us to contribute items to *InkSpots*. Send your articles, short stories, poems, etc. to Jay at triloci@hotmail.com. This newsletter belongs to all of us, so let's make it the best it can be.

Now for the fun stuff. We have hit a major membership milestone of 30 paid members. Shortly after we organ-

ized the Fremont Area Writers back in March 2008, the Central Board changed the minimum numbers of members that a new branch would need to receive its charter. They raised the number from 15 to 30. This past April, I met with CWC President Casey Wilson and then New Branch Development Chair, Allene Symons to go over our membership list. At that time, we had about 17 members, but had not collected any dues. We agreed that FAW would try to get its charter at the July meeting if we could meet the

30 members number. We were close at 24 and I was able to get the Central Board to accept us being that we should have been allowed to charter with 15. The vote was 16 with one abstention. Thus, on July 19, 2009 the Fremont Area Writers became the 18th branch of CWC. Being that this is the 100th anniversary of the founding of CWC, we call ourselves "The Centennial Branch." Pats on the back all around.

Take care.

Events – March 2010

28	1	2	3	4	5	6 British Poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning Born (1806)
7 Film Director and Screenwriter Stanley Kubrick Dies (1999)	8	9	10	11 Science-Fiction Author Douglas Adams Born (1952) 7:15 PM Board Mtg. Mountain Mike's	12	13
14	15	16	17 Cyberpunk Author William Gibson Born (1948)	18	19	20 Uncle Tom's Cabin Published (1852) Spring Begins
21	22	23	24	25 7:00 PM Open Mic Barnes and Noble 3900 Mowry Avenue Fremont	26	27 2:00 PM General Meeting Speaker: Allen Long Mountain Mike's
28 Peruvian Poet Mario Vargas Llosa Born (1936)	29	30	31	1 April Fools Day	2	3

