

The Gift I Cannot Keep By Patricia MacDonald

I feel you are the gift I cannot keep,
As I snuggle beside you, hearing you sleep.
I feel your form, your warmth and breath
Your tiny hands beneath the depth
Of the blankets and stuffies you are buried
Dreaming dreams of unicorns, princesses and fairies.

Your eyes of blue and skin so pale
Your smile so bright and heart so frail.
Your imagination is big, it's hard to say
If you'll meet these grand ideas someday.

My love for you is solid and strong
It hurts my heart when you are gone.
I want to keep you safe and warm
You are my daughter, you are my home.

A Community Project



Raiders and Giants

~ by Katie Milburn (age 13)

In the year 903, there was a small village in the Highlands of Scotland. It was a fishing village but you would never see anyone on the water later than sunset. Across the water there were several islands that nobody dared visit. There was a legend that told of undead raiders who lived on the islands and that every night they would journey to the mainland. Every night the villagers left fish bones, animal bones and the occasional root vegetable on the beach, because they believed that the raiders were infatuated with death and decay. The leaving of these offerings would satisfy the cravings of the raiders. Every day the villagers would fish, at sunset they left their offerings and the next day they would find them gone.

It so happened, that one of the fishing families fell out with the other villagers. They were driven to the very edge of the woods. The disgraced family dared not return to fish and so had nearly no food except the bits they could scavenge from the forest. The eldest daughter of the family, Ismay McLeod was growing tired of their constant hunger and feared the coming winter. They had no plant crops. Ismay would get them food the only way she could: fishing. She knew she could not enter the village by day and so she would enter it by night, for her fear of starvation was far greater than her fear of the undead raiders.

Raiders and Giants con't

So, Ismay set off for the small cluster of houses at the edge of the water. She entered the village quietly and tiptoed through the cluster of huts until she reached the water. Ismay walked quietly towards the fishing boats. The pile of bones was still there. Ismay shuddered as she looked towards the island she could just see in the distance. She turned and climbed into their fishing boat, which the villagers had left on the beach along with the others. Soon, she was rowing the small boat into her family's usual spot. It was not long before she had caught several fish, the moon and the waves lulling her into a strange sense of calm.

Then, out of the darkness came a sound that chilled Ismay down to her bones, the sound which she had been fearing. The sound of oars. Ismay dared not move a muscle. She stayed exactly where she was. She bent down. Her heart wasn't beating anymore, it was flying. She peered cautiously over the edge. Half a dozen small boats, like her own were rowing towards the shore. As they grew closer she saw not what she was expecting to see, terrifying axe-wielding skeletons, but men and women. Indeed, they looked just like the people from her village and were dressed quite the same.

"A little longer, and we'll be away from this accursed place," said a voice out of the gloom.

"Don't complain," scolded another voice, "We must collect the bones.

Else the giant will be displeased and rage upon our village."

The End.



"This is a photograph taken of a room in an an old apartment. The surrounding plants were always a safe space for me and during these scary isolation times, I miss having this many plants more than ever."

Lis Yorke

Daddy's Back

By James FW Thompson

Whenever Daddy came back from out west, mommy would watch out the window when she heard his truck drive up. She'd pick up baby, and in the truly happiest voice would say,

"Daddy's back!"

Baby would light up – arms flapping, a huge, gummy smile on her face. She glowed with excitement and joy,

But, the refinery was closed two months ago. Due to the outbreak. Daddy was sent home.

Since then, Mommy kept the game going. Whenever Daddy went to the store, she'd wait at the window. When she heard his truck pull back into the driveway she'd shout in her truly happiest voice,

"Daddy back!"

Baby would laugh and scream her high pitched squeal of delight. She'd rush to the gate at the top of the stairs and wait for Daddy to come in the door with a look of pure love in her eyes.

But the stores were closed three weeks ago. Due to the outbreak. Same as everything else. Daddy had no where he had to be.

Since then, Mommy kept it going- she wanted everything to be normal for her and Daddy and Baby. So, whenever Daddy went out to the barn, or to shovel the driveway, or check on the neighbours, she would wait by the window, Baby in her arms. When she saw Daddy coming up the walkway, she'd squeeze Baby and call out in her happiest, yet very tired voice,

"Daddy's back!"

But, the government requested that people not leave their homes for any reason. Due to the outbreak. That emergency services would come and collect them. That it was far too dangerous. That the infected would –

Mommy didn't want to think about it.

Daddy didn't want to think about it.

Baby was unaware of it, thankfully, and everyone hoped she never would be.

But the generator broke. And Daddy had to go outside.

Daddy didn't come back.

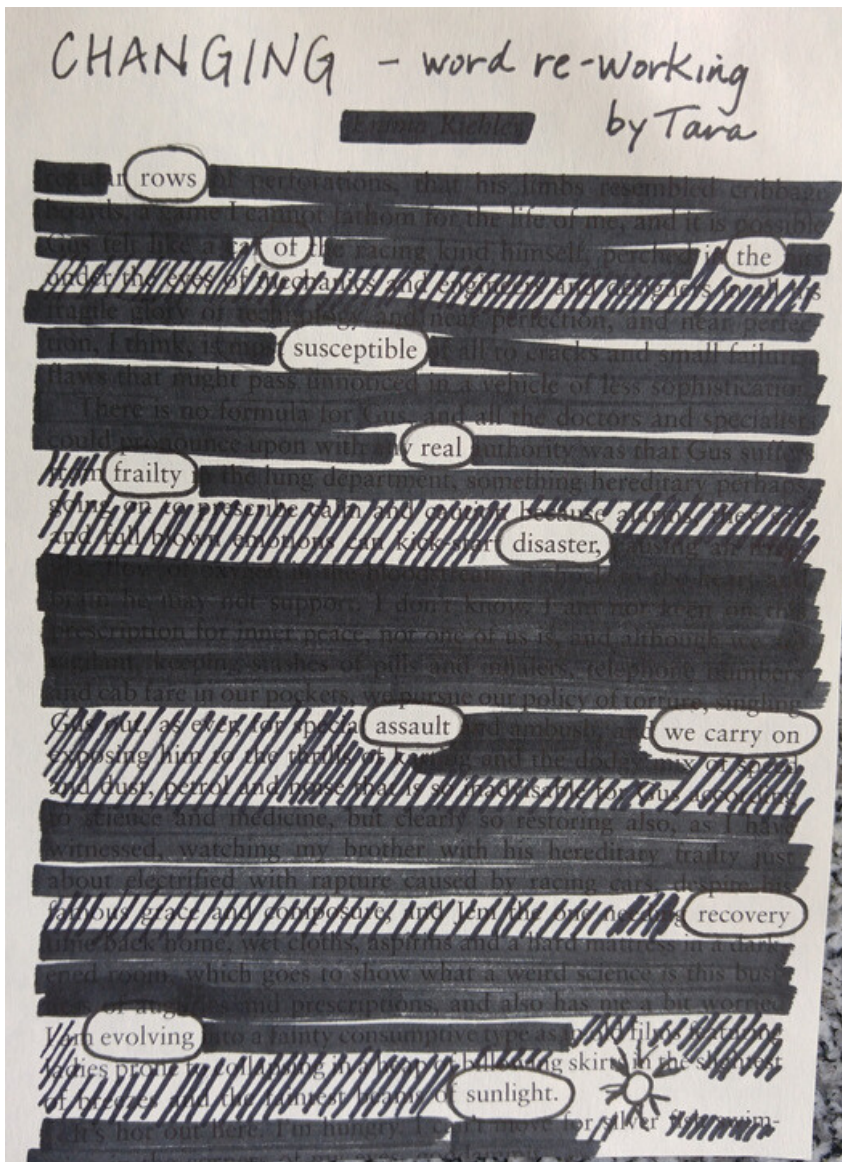
So Mommy waits. She knows what happened, though she doesn't want to think about it. So, she goes on like everything is normal. For Baby.

She was feeding Baby when she heard the feet in the driveway. She was standing when she heard them come up the steps. She headed away from the table for just a second when she heard the doorknob being fumbled with. She remembered that Daddy always forgot his keys.

The words came out of her before she could even think. Words that filled her with terror and dread. Words that, even as she reached for the rifle that Daddy had taken from the neighbour's house after it was abandoned, she hoped weren't true. Deep down she knew they were, before she even saw him.

"Daddy's back."

CHANGING - word re-working by Tara



< Blackout poems can be created using the pages of old books or yesterday's newspaper. Using the pages of an existing text, blackout poets isolate, then piece together single words or short phrases from these texts to create a poem.

The Trenches by Evan Martell (age 12)

When you've lived in the trenches of France for 3 years some things that originally sounded terrifying suddenly become... Routine. No longer do bullets whizzing by or explosions of sand, dirt, and gravel frighten a man of war. Or the men charging into battle wearing leather masks to protect them from the fatal fumes in the air. Life became almost bearable. But not perfect, frequent ambushes fought off with hourly ambushes and the same mucky porridge for breakfast, dinner and supper. Well, at least we got some toast with homemade jelly sent straight from our wives sometimes, alongside a pack of cigars and letters describing home life which I could not read. I would keep thinking of my family, my wife, my mother and my kids. What would they think if I came home and they saw me like this

A killer.
A man with no courage...
A man with no eyes...

OUTBREAK'S ODE TO THE IN-CROWDS

We just don't believe like we used to

Those

of a past

generation or two

needed no subject

to peddle sublime verbiage

even those who chose

to believe in nothing nonetheless

hydroplaned on the pooled

conscience of a contribution

to a fluid puzzle

gleefully awaiting little bangs

of innovational heredity

They were the mustard seed

generations

Their subsequent children

be they nesting birds

or intrusive

were destined for that tree to greet

their maiden flight

Then the trees

fell

into the abyssal path

imprinted on the groundwork

of ancestry

The elders

embezzled the leaves

to furnish their coffins and bloodlines

An egg without a nest now

is born to be rotten

with capital looking more

like the new cotton

Just when a generation

needs a peacekeeper magnetic enough

to lead from a bed of example

But no

For trust of that ilk

has been mangled by the distrust

outed so commonly

by the deaf choir of screens

and cameras

This is the new charisma

Even John Lennon can't jam

with these circumstances

for this is visual

and the outbreak confining us

to home fires is not

We didn't start it

the renegade flares

of a generation plead

Visuals rule now

Visionaries take heed

~ by Steve Fortune

05 10 20

**"ISOLATION
GIRAFFE"**
ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

Darlene Leahy



BOOK REVIEW: A STORY BY SHELLEY BROWN

I'm taking this opportunity to share a book review AND a story with everyone. "The Other Woman" by Sandie Jones is a book that I've recently read during our Covid-19 related closures. How I came across this book is actually kind of funny.

I was restocking the displays at the McConnell Library and as I pulled it off the shelf and skimmed the jacket, I thought to myself... I have to read this book! Remembering my neglected (and ever growing) stack of "to be read" items at home, I decided to add it to one of the displays instead. In the meantime, a good friend of mine came in to grab a book for another friend, who was waiting in her vehicle with her sleeping toddler. This book was the lucky pick, and off it went to Sharon's house! Two days later, she sent a message, "I couldn't put it down. Once you hit about half way, you're a goner and have to finish it. The twists were out of this world! Everyone read it!"

Well, first of all, I was very happy that my friend had enjoyed her library item so much! But then, I was hit with a major wave of book envy, so I promptly put my name on the waiting list. I still can't believe my luck that it arrived on our last open weekend.

Now comes the review part. Emily finds everything she's ever wanted in a significant other when she meets Adam. She falls head over heels for the man she plans to marry, but she's plagued by the troublesome relationship he has with his mother and the secrets from his past.

This psychological thriller is author Sandie Jones' debut novel. It's filled with suspense and kept me interested -and guessing - right up to the very last page. CBRL has multiple copies, including hard cover and paperback as well as Ebook format. Ebooks can be accessed from home during our closure, for free, like all of our library services! All you need is your library card. Visit CBRL.ca any time for more information on Ebooks or applying for a library card.

Some read alike options for this title (available through CBRL & in Ebook format as well!):

- The Last Mrs. Parrish - Liv Constantine (Next on my reading list!)
- Watching You- Lisa Jewell
- Whisper Network- Chandler Baker
- Paranoid- Lisa Jackson
- The Turn of the Key- Ruth Ware
- Mother In Law- Sally Hepworth

I would rate this one 4/5 only losing a point because I didn't really "like" any of the characters. They all served their purpose in their roles but I just don't think I'd like to share tea with any of them. The experience of how this book fell into my lap and how I enjoyed reading it is a solid 5/5, though.

If you enjoy thriller/ suspense/ psychological twists and turns the way I do...be sure to check it out.

EXCERPTS FROM MOVIE REVIEW: "THE GIVER"

by Presley Mackinnon (age 14)

What if nobody felt pain or sadness? Wouldn't that be a perfect world to live in? Would losing all the bad things in life be worth losing the good? "The Giver" answers these questions in a way that keeps viewers thinking.

The 2014 film version of Lois Lowry's novel was directed by Phillip Noyce and is similar to the book, although Hollywood has adapted certain aspects to help make the movie's intended audience teenagers. Philip Noyce achieved this by picking his actors wisely, choosing the right setting and building an emotional connection between the main characters, Odeya Rush (Fiona) and Brenton Thwaites (Jonas).

The dystopian theme, is represented throughout the movie. At the end of the film, the audience is left to reflect and decide if "sameness" actually has a positive or negative effect. Philip Noyce tries to show the idea of "sameness" through visual representation and different expressions that the actors use.

...

The plot of this movie is fairly similar to the book. However, Lois Lowry devoted more time to writing the exposition, to plant the idea of "sameness" in the Community into the readers head. Phillip Noyce condensed the exposition ... and represented it visually. Lois Lowry also ... described the rules of the Community [for example, no one has a separate birthday..and no one makes their own decisions]. Even though these plots [vary], both the author and director leave their audiences with ideas to ponder.

I believe that both the film and the book are worth reading and watching. In the end, we realize that achieving sameness has both good and bad sides... The Community is set up to make a life where you don't make your own choices. Even though this solves many world issues such as war, loss and pain, it takes away people's ability to feel love, happiness and to have freedom. Life has many difficulties, but feeling love and happiness is the true meaning of life and it was wrong for the Community to take that away from the people.

What St. Anne's Elementary Means to Me
A speech Samantha MacDonald gave at her Gr. 5 graduation ceremony (2019)

St. Anne's is a school anyone would love to enroll in. I spent 6 years there all together, and they were amazing. I love all the teachers I had during those years.

Starting with my grade primary teacher. She loved the Montreal Canadians. She called us primary awesome. She was pretty awesome herself.

In grade one I had a really kind teacher. She was another amazing teacher. She taught us more about adding and subtracting.

Next is my second grade teacher. She let us take care of caterpillars and raise them to butterflies. When they grew up we let them go free. She was a very fun teacher to have experiences with. She gave me my love for Monarch butterflies.

Next is my grade 3 teacher. She did a special activity with gems, and when we were good we got a handful of them, and when we filled the jar we got a special treat. It was really fun. In grade three we also made time capsules.

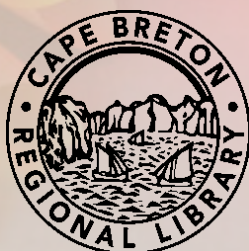
Next, is grade 4. The teacher picked a student of the month, and gave them a shirt. I still have the shirt she gave me. She was a wonderful teacher.

In grade 5 I had an awesome teacher. She was really funny, and amazing. We also had my grade 3 teacher for the last half of the day. She got us a fish named Dwayne "The Fish" Johnson and a snail too.. We did debating and I think we won at least one of the debates. We debated that homework shouldn't be banned. Debating helped me argue with my family and win!

I can't forget my music teacher, my band teacher, my gym teacher and my French teacher. They all played a huge part in my education at St. Anne's.

I'm going to miss St. Anne's, our amazing teachers, Dwayne, our snail and our principal. But I'm also going to have a blast at OVEC. I love St. Anne's Elementary and this is what it means to me.

Thank-you to OurZINE contributors: Evan Martell; Darlene Leahy; James F.W. Thompson; Katie Milburn; Lis Yorke; Patricia MacDonald; Presley MacKinnon; Samantha MacDonald; Shelley Brown & Steven Fortune.



WWW.CBRL.CA

   @CBRLibrary

CBRL would also like to thank Arlington Public Libraries for their inspirational 'Quaranzine'.