

Just Write

Gloucester County Library System

Logan Township Branch

Writers Group

Selections

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CRY BABY

Once upon a time there was a little girl. She had been invited to have an overnight visit at the home of her big brother's fiancé. It was a familiar home by day, and the family treated her well and as a special guest. She was to sleep in the bed of the young bride-to-be, in whose wedding she was delightedly looking forward to being the lavender-dress flower girl.

However, as the evening lengthened, the young one was sent to bath and bed while the older company continued the pleasurable companionship below. Jealousy and discontent entered the heart of the child. How could she gain re-entry into the fun?

Idea!! If she should cry to get attention, wouldn't the family have sympathy and bring her back among them?

Well, it took some loud crying to get attention in the big house, but in due time someone came in response. "What's wrong?" "I want my Mommy" or some such lie, by a child who rarely felt homesick, and had often spent overnights happily with cousins and aunts.

What should be done? A phone call was made, and all was fixed—Daddy would drive to the home and get his daughter. And so it happened. The lovely visit was cut short, and although no one scolded, even in that child mind there was understanding of the foolishness of the lie.

This true story happened about sixty years ago. Not nearly as much was learned, at the time, as could have been about contentment with the gift that is given, the hollow rewards of self-gratification, the loneliness of deception and other life lessons.

Aslan tells Lucy, "You can never know what would have been." However, a content girl could have enjoyed a pleasant sleep in a comfy bed and room, the company of her sister-in-law to be, and most certainly a lovely and special breakfast prepared by the mother in the home who was truly a cook of renown. What a poor harvest the lie produced, understood enough by the child-mind to be remembered *with feelings* all of these long years after.

Perhaps it would be a good exercise to remember past wrongs and trace their outcomes. Why be a slow learner all of one's life?

Jane Harre

"Music is a people-person"

I started listening to music when I was in junior high school, more because the kids in school talked about it with such enthusiasm that I wanted to know what they were getting so excited about. I didn't know why Pink Floyd was so cool, or what made Pat Benatar so hot, or why the guys from Def Leppard were considered so cute. My mother didn't keep the radio on all the time for us kids, like I do now, for myself and my kids. My kids started listening to music as soon as they were born and to this day, both listen to rap, rock, country, oldies and r&b, just off the top of my head.

But that is not why music is a people person...for this, one must understand the role of music in life, or at least in my life. With every person I have met and yes, every one that I have let leave my life, there are songs that introduced me to that person. And there are songs that helped me get to know that person as well. There are songs that when they come on the radio make me remember my first husband...and my second husband...and all of the loves of my life since then.

But there is one in particular whose relationship with, is defined by music, because he is a musician. Again, music was the one who introduced us: I was working as a late night waitress and he was coming back from a gig. He left me his phone number the first time but it took him a couple of months of coming in and leaving his phone number for me to call him. But call him I did.

His rehearsal space is right down the street from where I lived at the time. He went to jams that were local to me so I started going to them too. I love to dance, and I think he loved to watch me dance, I went to as many of his gigs as I could manage. Our relationship grew deeper when he was the only one who visited me during a week long hospital stay. Oh, and brought me clothes, got my car home and picked me up when I was released.

But soon things changed. It seems that everything changed in my life and a lot changed in his; and because of these changes we were growing further and further apart. Music couldn't save us. But it continues to allow us to remember each other. I still look for his band in the paper, and think of him whenever I hear a song that they cover. I don't curse the day I met him. I am not sad that he isn't in my life anymore. I am thankful, to music, for bringing us together for the time we did have. And that is what music means to me.

On Sun, Nov 27, 2011, Pam Champagne

A Good Stretch
By Caroline Kalfas

It's an exaggeration to say that Jane Fonda and I are good friends.

But off and on for more than 25 years, the former exercise guru has gotten me through some tough times.

Five pounds here, another five pounds there -- no matter what I weigh, she doesn't judge as I stand before her with my "feet hip-distance apart" and "ready to work out."

I had graduated college when I first "met" Jane. Through the magic of television and a VHS player, Jane led me through various routines and stretches with her "New Workout" video. My spot was on the blue carpet near the fireplace in the family room -- sometimes in the afternoon, other times on Saturdays. Space was tight. I would have to be careful when I raised my arms not to knock the wagon wheel light fixture that hung from the ranch house ceiling. But soon, my mother and two younger sisters joined me and my friend Jane for regular exercise. We looked great in our hand-knit leg warmers.

At work, I heard fellow co-workers complain that Jane's exercise tapes were too difficult. But Jane was my friend, and I had nothing bad to say. With help from a remote control and the magic of fast-forward, I skipped the sit-ups and crunches that I didn't enjoy and found the rest of her workout to be a great complement to tennis and walking.

Many exercise options have followed since Jane introduced me to aerobics. Today, classes are offered in yoga, spinning, kick boxing and pilates. People are using balls, weights, steps and bands to work off their pounds. Treadmills, elliptical machines and stationary bikes continue to keep people moving indoors.

I've tried them all.

Now, I'm a middle-aged woman with two kids. My exercise routine revolves more around the family schedule and convenience rather than my own. I still like to play tennis and walk. And although my kids keep me busy and challenge me to a pick-up game of basketball or a bike ride through the neighborhood now and then, I always return to Jane and her "New Workout" VHS video.

I can't explain it, but I find comfort in the familiar exercise and hearing her say, "Muscles don't work as well when they're dehydrated," or "Ooooh, that's a good stretch. Can you feel it?"

After that 30-minute routine of stretches and aerobics, I feel the same as I did when I was 22 years old exercising in my family room. I am fit and fabulous!

(And that is a good stretch.)

©

IMPRESSIONS ON CRUMBS OF DELIGHT
Musings of a Wannabe 60's Poet

Listening Hearing
Challenges in the night
Sweet cinnamon! Are there other kinds?
Powdered! Imported! Crystal! Sugar!
Tastes all the same or not
Differences if taken from behinds
The Left over the Right
Does the bubble gum lose
Its flavor on the bedpost
Overnight?

Oh buoy me up says he
Sugar and spice
Throughout the way
This journey inflated we be
Whoa! Put forth! Stop!
Hot air canvas,
Balloons, encrusted iron
SHIPS vehicles every curtain on top
Has the one on a pilgrimage
Feasted on earth's crust
Tripping as in a free balloon
Reaching for the moon's montage.

Is this day or is it night
To bright; your say, to color this right
To which cometh overwhelming might
We see! We do! We breathe!
Dawn, Siesta time to tea time
And into our lives throughout the night

Once again freed to ponder
Muse sate and come to light.

+ Are we lost... What are we looking for? Sugar easy ways? Alcohol, Drugs, Power? Or Light as in dawning and coming to earth, Down to earth.. Free as in a hot air balloon. Lost as at sea. Salt as opposed to sugar. Our lives on canvas- a painting or a photograph? What matters?



Just Write

Meetings Held 2nd & 4th Wednesdays @

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