

Pen & Ink Writers' Group

The truth is...we gather on the Third Monday of each month to practice our writing skills. We listen and share in each other's work. We are small in number and our commitment is strictly to produce and foster creativity among our members.

We started in July 1999 and consist of adults that enjoy writing memoirs, commentaries, essays, poems, and/or prose. Our simple method each month is to use a pre-selected word or phrase as the basis of a story, an idea, an opinion, a derivative of, or an implied essence of and write a 1 to 1 ½ page document. We share our stories, comment, and in that way build up our writing skills through practice and presentation. The atmosphere is friendly and supportive, and the feedback is gentle.

Curious? Always wanted to try writing for fun, entertainment, or even profit? Come visit with us at any of our open meetings. Bring a sample of your work. Sit in and see what we do. If you like it, join us every month and become a member.

Works of the Members of the Pen & Ink Writers' Group © 2014 Pen & Ink Writers' Group

August 2014 selection – Premonition

Premonition By Elvira K. Castello

I remember when I was a young girl during WW II, my Mother, who claimed to have premonitions, said she had a "premonition" that something was going to happen to her cousin Elmer who was serving as a soldier. She said she saw a vision of him standing in our kitchen, and she knew something was going to happen by the look on his face. Indeed, soon after, we learned he was killed by a Japanese sniper.

It is strange how some people receive a so-called premonition or forewarning on future events. One person I feel was definitely gifted in his premonitions was Rod Serling, who was the creator and main writer of the television show, "The Twilight Zone."

One example of this is a program relating very much to our current unemployment crisis and the loss of many jobs due to technology. The story, entitled "The Brain Center at Whipple's," is about Wallace Whipple, a factory owner, who automates his plant, putting thousands of people out of work, including his Chief Engineer and Foreman. His Foreman is very upset and angry, so he confronts Mr. Whipple, telling him what he's doing with all this automation by putting people out of work and ruining their lives. The Foreman is not only angry, but he is drunk, so he attacks one of the computers, smashes it, and causes it to burst into flames. Mr. Whipple stops the Foreman's destructive behavior by shooting him. Fortunately, he only wounds him and he doesn't die.

Mr. Whipple feels no remorse for shooting at the Foreman as he feels he was only protecting his precious, money saving computer. He also feels no remorse in firing his faithful Chief Engineer, who also is no longer needed and being replaced by the computer. Just like many businesses, factories, etc. today, the plant owner was only thinking about money and the profit he will make by replacing his employees with computers. Does all this sound familiar? And, Rod Serling presented this story on May 15, 1964, 50 years ago!

Later in the story a technician confronts the plant owner saying how lonely it was in the plant with no people and how selfish and uncaring he was to use machines instead of workers in his plant. This, however, does not affect the owner's conscience. He is so proud of himself and self-satisfied, thinking how wealthy he will become.

At the end of the story, the plant owner turns on the computer to get a self-review and all it contains is the criticisms from the Chief Engineer, the Foreman and the technician. Ironically, a robot then walks into the room and tells Mr. Whipple he is no longer needed and is being replaced by the robot.

I have to say, as simple as this story was portrayed, it certainly was a premonition of the devastation of loss of jobs in our present society. And, like Mr. Whipple, no one cares or has a conscience -- they just keep creating more money-saving technologies. Soon there will no longer be minimum wage jobs -- Robots will serve us at McDonald's. As Rod Serling said, "It's a battle between flesh and steel, and no one is the winner!"

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Premonition By Valerie Collins

She did not consider herself superstitious or illogical. Actually she was a rational young woman who viewed the events of daily life in a realistic way. When others read into peculiar occurrences she knew there were practical explanations to be found. That is why this strange feeling nagging her one morning felt foreign to her sense of pragmatism.

The day began like any other. She awoke... before the alarm clock sounded its call to the day's start and went through the motions of morning routine. She stepped into the kitchen to prepare some breakfast and all the while attempted to fight off this nagging feeling. Something was amiss. Was it a foreboding of what was about to happen that day... something unpleasant, something disagreeable, something indeed frightening? She just couldn't shake this premonition as irrational as it was.

The young woman went about her day, working as usual, running errands afterwards then meeting friends for drinks at the local hangout. Nothing out of the ordinary occurred. The strange feeling that needled her this very morning seemed to ebb away. Perhaps it was the business of the day and the familiar routines that overshadowed any discomfort that might have lingered otherwise. At any rate the young woman was feeling more like her

logical self. In fact she even quite forgot what had troubled her mind earlier in the day. She and her friends chatted long into the early evening, enjoying each other's company and catching up on details of their lives. It had been a good day. Now as the sun lowered itself in the sky the promise of night was approaching. It was time to bid farewell and head home.

The young woman stepped into her car and began her journey. A cool crisp autumn evening was settling in requiring the woman to wrap a sweater tight around her shoulders. It was twilight time, that part of the day when night tiptoes forward in soft whispers. The sky was darkening with gray-blue streaks and muted light was fast disappearing. As the woman stepped out of her car once home the shadows of night were arriving. It was not completely dark yet but enough so for her to wish the front porch light had been left on. The young woman put her key into the keyhole, unlocked the door and stepped inside. As she proceeded forward into the hallway an audible thumping was sounded upstairs much like heavy footsteps. Terrified yet unwilling to be daunted by this occurrence, the young woman called out in the strongest voice she could muster. "Who is it?" she demanded. The thumping stopped and silence prevailed. She continued on into the house when once again the thumping! "Who is there?" she bellowed. Again the footstep-like sounds ceased. The young woman knew the house had been securely locked and from a cursory scanning of the place nothing had suggested a break in. Still this was daunting especially given the premonition experienced earlier that day. All right she thought. I am an intelligent sensible woman who does not yield to silly notions and will certainly not let fear get the better of me. Actually anger was building at the thought that somebody might have had the nerve to invade her domicile! While these thoughts were whirling in her head those thumping footsteps resumed. Now some might think that this was quite unwise but nevertheless the young woman picked up a small bat she had available for protection and proceeded up the stairs to face this intruder. "You better show yourself, she warned as she climbed. Again silence was the answer. Slowly, boldly she entered the upstairs bedroom and there lounging on the floor was her old dog Skip! He showed his pleasure at her return to the house by wagging his tail, which hit the floor when he did so. Hence the thumping! When she spoke he was quiet as he listened to her voice. Mystery solved. Premonition rebuffed.

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"SEXY RUSSIAN BRIDE Katrova will Marry YOU! Ask her now."

By J. Smetana

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On the first part of the journey I was looking at all the life. There were plants and birds and rocks and things, there was sand and hills and rings. We were a little more than a mile from camp when the road smoothed, passing between level pasture lands on one side, grain fields on the other. Suddenly Barbee brought our vehicle to a halt and reached for his binoculars. Facing away from us stood a solitary white-collared peccary of trophy-sized proportions. The wind was blowing in our faces from across the field, a favorable

stroke of luck. I would have to make my stalk in the open, crossing through at least a hundred yards of knee-deep barley grass and side oats. As long as the unsuspecting pig continued to face away from me, I wouldn't have much difficulty getting within range. I covered the first fifty yards in a matter of minutes, sacrificing stealth for speed. I had to get within shooting range before the animal shifted its position. As I drew nearer, I slowed my approach, being more careful not to alert my quarry. My heart began to pound in my throat as the massive size of the boar became increasingly apparent. Forty yards! Then, quite abruptly, the javelina raised its head, shifted its body and faced me. I froze, not moving a muscle, hoping that my two colleagues behind were doing the same. Two large, yellowed tusks conspicuously protruded from the animal's mouth, posing a sinister appearance. Seconds passed like minutes, and minutes like hours, while Barbee, Schouers and I remained absolutely motionless. I slowly and deliberately drew back on the string of my seventy-five-pound Jennings "S" handle compound bow. Stretching the bow limbs to the optimum with my thirty-inch draw, I released the string sending an aluminum arrow flying through the air at better than 120 miles per hour. The shaft, tipped with a satellite broadhead, struck its mark with devastating efficiency, passing completely through the unsuspecting animal. The large boar lurched forward, more out of reflex than design. Barbee, my chief skeptic, appeared considerably surprised at the accuracy and efficiency of a bow and arrow as a hunting tool. The crickets and the rust-beetles scuttled among the nettles of the sage thicket. "Vamonos, amigos," he whispered, and threw the busted leather flint crow over the loose weave of the saddle cock. And they rode on in the friscalating dusk light.

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Premonition or Imagination **By N. Stewart**

Premonition that feeling in the gut, that hair raising on the back of the neck, that sense that something is not quite right, that early warning that makes the body ready to stand and fight or to take flight, is it a natural occurring phenomenon or is it just imagination?

While driving on a tollway on my way to Delavan Wisconsin in a thunderous, raging rain storm, the voice came into my head and said "If you continue on, you will die." Following that a vision of a two lane country road came into view as the blades wiped furiously to clear the window. Suddenly in that vision, I saw that I had lost all control and the car skidded off the pavement, rolling over and over and over, landing smashed and upside down in the middle of a rain soaked corn field. The scene lasted a mere fraction of a second and all faded from grey to black. Seeing that was enough for me as I wasn't stubborn enough or perhaps stupid enough to challenge what I saw, by continuing on and headed off the tollway at the next exit, arriving back home a bit shaken but safe.

Again I was on my way to Wisconsin and all that Saturday morning four numbers kept repeatedly popping into my head and or I would see the same numbers, appearing on different items. A very strong feeling came over me that I should play Lotto, and even

provided the store where I needed to buy the ticket. All I would have to do is stop, purchase a ticket using the numbers and I would win millions of dollars. The voice said I had to buy the ticket exactly at 12:43 p.m. Was it wishful thinking or was it a premonition? Going about what I needed to do, I packed the suitcases and the food in the trunk of the car, checked the house one more time, and got into the car to leave. I drove passed the pharmacy where the purchase was to take place, looking down I discovered it was 12:41. Still enough time to park and purchase the winning ticket. Ignoring the thought, I drove on, never to this day knowing whether I could have become an instant multi-millionaire by following the premonition.

One November evening I was headed to a house party with some office friends, when I greatly sensed a life change was about to happen to me. It was just a normal, run of the mill party when unexpectedly an extended hand was offered and a voice asked if I wanted to dance. The crowd around us quickly melted into the background and all I could see was his smiling face and all I felt was his strong arms around me. I knew I had found my soul mate with that leap of faith.

These events were they premonitions or were they figments of my imagination? Had I followed or not followed the voice would the events turn out differently? Would I have died in a car crash that stormy day? Would I have become a millionaire by holding the winning ticket? Would I have not met my soul mate because I didn't go to the party that night?

I will never know what guided me to make the choices I made. Somehow it all worked out whether it was premonition or imagination.