

**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.

**Original Works by Members of the Pen & Ink Writers' Group**  
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**March 2019 selection – Vertigo**

**Vertigo**  
by Elvira Castillo L

Visualizing the woman whose profile fascinated Ron in the Hospital Cafeteria,

Excited him at the thought he may see her again, giving him VERTIGO.

Ron could not believe it when he once again saw her in the Hospital Chapel.

Tears he noticed again seem to fill her eyes.

Intrigued as to what made her so sad.

Gradually he approached, spoke to her and learned her name was Grace and the story of how her marriage ended and her faithfulness to her now deceased ex-husband.

Outcome - A future date for dinner for Ron and Grace, a God made and well deserved possible new life together. It was just plain meant to be and planned by you know who.

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## **The Edge**

**By N. Stewart**

I was standing on a precipice overlooking Devil's Lake when I had this sudden feeling that I was going to fall face first into the abyss below. I couldn't stop myself from envisioning the fall through the air, tumbling, hitting the rocks, and tumbling some more. I saw my body battered, scratched, and bleeding. My arm broken and dangling in an awkward unnatural position. The ground was coming up to meet me faster and faster. I could hear myself scream.

I forced myself to step back from the edge and realized that I was dizzy, experiencing perhaps vertigo and had I not stepped away I might have accidently pitched forward in real time. My mind flashed back to earlier moments when I had looked down at the rocky bluff mere inches beyond my feet. I saw its many rocky outpourings, sparse number of bushes and way down in what looked like a tiny child's pool with its dirty, muddy brown water was the lake.

I stood on firm ground now but the waves of a dark foreboding still swept over me. I had to let them subside before moving on.

Calmed and standing safely away from the edge, I wondered if that sensation could possibly prelude the feelings of a person contemplating suicide. It would be a split-second decision, determining whether to take that fatal step forward or to take that safe step backward. Would a person standing at the edge and contemplating suicide see what I saw in the inherent dangers of a fall over the edge or would they see something else entirely different? Something perhaps beautiful and angelic or maybe a nothingness, a blackness, the end to it all.

The world can be a dark, lonely place at times, becoming ugly where life has no meaning. Perhaps the anticipation of the act seemingly offers light, peace, and comfort to those that suffer, releasing them from pain or anguish. Perhaps to others it offers darkness, releasing them from self-inflicted chaos and mortal weaknesses. How much does loneliness play into the suicide picture? No friends, no one to listen, no encouragement and alone with the evil, dark self-thoughts that continuously roll through the mind. Is committing suicide better for an individual because it ends their personal torment or is it a convenient dodge, an unwillingness to muster the moxie it takes to live through what ends up to be a momentary devastation of the soul?

Experience shows us nothing good or bad lasts forever in this up and down world where we live. A change for the better may be just around the next corner. Why discard a life so easily?

Wait, slow it down. I'm making judgments about something I have very little information on. I know nothing of what it is like to be in a desperate place where suicide is the only answer. I've never walked in those shoes. Stepping further away from the bluff's edge and putting aside my thoughts on suicide, I began to descend the path to the lower and more secure ground level.

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Note:

15 Common reasons for suicide

Mental illness – anxiety, bipolar, depression, schizophrenia

Traumatic experience – PTSD, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, war

Bullying – ruined reputation

Personality disorders – unable to function in society  
Drug and/or substance abuse  
Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia  
Unemployment – no sense of purpose or belonging  
Loneliness – isolated from family, society  
Relationship problems  
Family history  
Philosophical desire/Existential crisis – life has no meaning  
Terminal illness – frustration, shock, feeling of hopelessness  
Chronic pain – impairs ability to function or perform  
Financial problems – no end to debt  
Prescription drugs – chemical imbalance, mind altering

Mental Health Daily, March 16, 2019