

# WORDPLAY

## Writers' Forum

Intelligent, Interesting, Informative, Inspirational

Ezine, Issue 8, September 6th 2010

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## GIANT LEAP FORWARD

Welcome to the latest issue of the Ezine. As ever, WordPlay continues to develop and expand. Thanks to all our members everywhere for your support. As of this month, WordPlay is now reaching over 100,000 readers as a result of having a regular feature in Spain's most widely read English print newspaper, The Costa Blanca News. The column looks at a whole range of writing related topics as well as providing yet another platform for bringing the work of its members to a wider audience. Proof once more - if any were needed - that WordPlay strives to encourage writers to write, and to then gets them read. This month sees our internal short story competition won by new member Gerry Wright: a cracking little story which you can find on page 5, and two brand new contributors, Michelle Edwards and Georgia Varjas. Starting in January we will be producing a sister publication 'The Story Behind the Story' which will appear quarterly. Already submissions have been arriving from all over the world. Details can be found at [www.wordplaywriters.com](http://www.wordplaywriters.com)

The same site gives details of all of WordPlay's range of activities and services. Join in wherever you may be.

### WINNING OPPORTUNITIES WITH WORDPLAY

Following on from their introduction in July, August saw the second of our open short story competitions. However, with the summer shutdown around the world, too few entries were received to judge. In fact, only two were sitting in our inbox on closing date (the 25th of each month), and so - as the rules state - these have been rolled over for judging in the September contest. With £75 and ezine publication for the winner, and £25 for second place, up for grabs, all writers around the world have a great chance to profit from their penmanship. Why not give it a go? This time next month you could find yourself £75 better off, and with a publication credit against your name. To give you an idea of a winning style, we have published last month's runner-up by Callum Green from Canada where this month's winner should have been (page 2).

Visit our website [www.wordplaywriters.com](http://www.wordplaywriters.com) for more information about how you can enter.

### THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

If competition writing isn't for you, why not submit a short story for our new quarterly publication, "The Story behind the Story"? With payment for accepted entries to WordPlay members, and WordPlay Writing accreditation for non members, is there a better way to get your words published? Launched last month, we have already received submissions from three continents, and are seeking more - many more! The final publication, due in early January - will be sent to our ezine subscriber list and, just as importantly, to a select list of agents and publishers. More information can be found on page 13 of this issue. WordPlay: encouraging writers to write, and then getting them read. Keep writing, keep playing with words.

Michael and Ian

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# WORDPLAY OPEN SHORT STORY COMPETITION

JULY 2010 RUNNER UP – £25 prize



## SNOW BLIND by Callum Green



### Judges' Comments:

*Callum's entry was neck and neck with the eventual winner, 'Good to Go' by Christian Cook. It is a story of the actions and deeds of the protagonist over the course of a few minutes which altered the course of his career, marriage, and ultimately his view on life. We find ourselves drawn into the tale, with descriptive prose allowing us to see and feel the events leading to the story's conclusion. In any other month, this entry may have been the winner.*

Jack Cranford's eyes remained fixed on the horizon, where the next commuter train had finally appeared. The one that would transport him to a job he used to love, but now loathed. He found himself thinking back to the event that had led him to be stood on this platform, at this time...

\*\*\*

Early and unannounced, the first snow of the season had pounced on the small Mid West town, leaving it in a temporary shock induced limbo. It had been snowing for less than an hour, but already the ground was lavishly cloaked in a virginal quilt. The blizzard was growing in strength, its icy fingers wrapping themselves round Jack's midriff and clawing into the gaps of his inadequate autumnal jacket. Sharp icicles of pain stabbed deep into his bones. Punching at his key fob, the central lock on his SUV clanked submission. His feet, though only on the white carpet for a few seconds, were already cold. An uncomfortable dampness grabbed at his feet, as the snow crept above his brogues and into his socks. *Damn*, he thought, *the weather girl never gets it right*. To his logical brain, meteorological forecasts were anathema. He couldn't understand how, after so many centuries of scientific advancement, with so many satellites littering the night sky, and with so much information now at forecasters' fingertips, forecasting accuracy had not improved one iota over the last hundred years. Trudging awkwardly away from his vehicle, he found the path toward the pharmacy. He'd received a call from his wife as soon as the snow had started to fall: she had run out of her medicine. The snow made her condition worse, and it was only the tablets that helped her continue with a normal daily routine: something that Jack thought was more in her head than in her bones. The snow coming early meant that Sarah didn't feel able to collect the boys from school, so Jack had left work early to accommodate his wife's foibles, and his sons' requirements. His employer's relaxed attitude to his compassionate needs was one of the reasons why he loved his job so much. Against his better judgement, he forced his sleeve up his arm and studied the face of his watch. He analyzed the situation. The pharmacy was fifty yards away: a minute's walk, then ten minutes inside while the prescription was made up. A further minute back to the car, and a couple of minute's drive to the school. He should make it in time. As he moved closer to the row of stores that housed the CS drug store, his thoughts turned to his career coach back at high school. He had said that an analytical mind like Jack's would best be served in one of three career paths. Jack hadn't relished the danger that joining the police might put him in, and he balked at the long hours and personal invasion that a reporter's life would give him. So, fresh out of College, he had joined Samuelson Chemicals as a Laboratory Technician. Two years into the job, a fresh-faced intern was placed under him. Sarah became his wife within twelve months. It had never bothered him that he hadn't climbed the ladder of success very far: he wasn't money motivated and preferred the easy life that obscurity in a sea of white coats gave him. The one thing he and Sarah had craved for was parenthood, and they had eventually been blessed with two boys. They called them their two little miracles: after six miscarriages, they had been told by every expert opinion they had sought that children were no longer an option for them. Then, out of the blue, along came the twins. At the foot of the steps to the pharmacy, Jack felt a sharp thump to the back of his head, and a grab at his arm. 'Sorry, Mister,' the teenager called, continuing to run away from his attacker. 'Snowballs' Jack muttered to himself. 'I hate snowballs.' A trickle of melting snow, residue from the cannon ball that had hit him, meandered down his spine like a glacial river through the

Alps. *Damn kids*, he thought, as they rounded the corner of the block and disappeared from sight. Opening the door of the drug store, and with the warmth hitting him – like stepping from a cold shower into the sauna room that he had had installed for Sarah last fall - he had second, more analytical, thoughts about the two snowballers. *Just kids playing. At least they apologized. Not bad kids, really.* Ten minutes later, with a mini pharmacy in a bag grasped tightly in his left hand, and his feet once more sinking deep into the snow, Jack found himself rooted on the sidewalk in disbelief. The space where his car should have been now lay empty. Tire tracks leading away from the SUV's temporary open-air abode were already part filled by the heavy snowfall. *I should phone the police. But they'll take an age to get here. I'll miss the boys. I can phone the police after I collect Matt and Marc. Then the cops can take all the time they want. They probably wouldn't find who did it anyway. The school is only a couple of blocks away. I can make it in five minutes. Then I'll walk the kids home, and tell Sarah what's happened. No, I'll phone Sarah now, then she can phone the police, save time. Maybe they'll be at the house by the time I arrive with the boys.* With his mind racing through the ramifications should he do the wrong thing, Jack pushed away from the spot where the snow threatened to engulf him and started walking to the school. He fumbled in his top pocket, pulling his cell phone. Pushed the speed dial for home, and spoke to Sarah. She was worried about the boys: a mother's natural instinct. Only with Sarah's past - how difficult seeing a pregnancy to term had been - that instinct was heightened to almost neurotic level. She started to babble on about how the head teacher takes a dim view of parental tardiness; how if she'd known Jack was going to be so careless she'd have gone to collect them herself; how, despite her condition, Jack cared more about his job, and his precious SUV than her....'Don't worry. Sarah, I'll be there. Five minutes, I promise' Jack strained to make her hear. But she was gone, the line dead. He stabbed his thumb on redial. Nothing: no signal. *Damn weather.* Each step seemed to require more effort than the previous one, the snow now falling almost horizontally, creating a mist of white and hiding the horizon from view. His hands were cold, blocks of ice that he moved continually in and out of pockets to try to keep warm. All that seemed to achieve was to remind him how each pocket was devoid of a set of car keys. *How could I have been so stupid? How didn't I feel the kid's hand slip into my jacket pocket and lift my keys?* It was the only logical explanation. He had been pick pocketed by some snotty nosed teenager, who then had used the keys to drive away in Jack's SUV, which would explain why the alarm had not sounded. *Damn kids*, he thought, cursing himself as much as them. Perhaps he should have stayed at the pharmacy, phoned Sarah and told her to brave the weather. He should have taken the opportunity to do so when she had suggested the same on the phone. She was, after all, only a few minutes drive from the school, even in this atrocious weather. His suit clung to him, soaked by the constant snow, and now useless as protection against the chill North Westerly wind that drove the blizzard across his path. Traffic was getting heavier now. Although he couldn't readily see it, he could hear it. Mothers arriving at the school to pick their little dears up. School buses ploughing their way through and creating deep furrows for others to follow. If he screwed his eyes tight he could make out the headlights winding their way toward their prey, mostly elementary school horrors who would come running and skipping out of classrooms throwing snowballs and expecting an hour of ice cold fun before supper time. He pulled his sleeve up, just enough to see the dial of his wristwatch. Two minutes to go, before the end of school alarm sounded. Before pandemonium would break out. Before Mat and Marc would run expectantly to the school gates to see no one. He hated thinking of them among a sea of people, forlorn faces and confusion within. He increased his stride until he was almost at running pace. Breaking into a sweat, a near impossibility in such weather, he inched closer to his target. Fifty yards to travel, and the inevitable happened. A loud horn blast roared from beyond the school fence. To Jack, the end of school alarm always had the air of an air raid warning. An apt preamble to the bombardment of kids that would follow within seconds. *I must get there*, he thought, his legs now pumping as hard as they could. With the snow thick around him, the mist of the blizzard closing like a blanket, and his mind set solely on racing to be by the boys' side, determination to be at the school gates drove him forward. Like a gazelle, he galloped awkwardly across the open field onto the sidewalk opposite Jackson Elementary and into the road. The school horn ceased abruptly, somehow replaced by another, more urgent screech: a sound familiar to him. He looked to his left, and then to his right, and saw headlights he knew. The headlights of his SUV, hurtling toward them at breakneck speed, the car out of control. Another horn blared incessantly, from behind him. He turned. A familiar face. Sarah. His legs crumpled, hit from behind by his own vehicle. Driven forwards, with Sarah's face closing in like a full moon on Thanksgiving - large, bright, and scared for the future - Jack's mind flipped. He tried to find the solution, dissecting his predicament as if it were some chemical formula with a logical conclusion. The only answer he could come to was indeed logical. His life was about to end.

The face of an angel, screwed into the mask of an ugly gargoyle was the last thing he would see. Crushed between the car of his dreams and the car of the woman of his dreams, his world changed from virginal white to a color darker than black.

\*\*\*

Three months hospitalization had been followed by three months intensive physiotherapy. Sarah had found it all incredibly difficult. Looking after two children was hard enough, having a third suddenly thrust upon her proved too much. Jack had visited the teenager responsible for his crushed legs in juvenile penitentiary. It was part of a program that was meant to help rehabilitate the offender and give a sense of closure to the victim. Jack doubted it achieved either of these aims. Certainly, for his part the feeling he got from the experience matched the feeling in his legs: nothing. Sarah never understood why Jack had agreed to the visit. She blamed herself for the accident. She said she had tried to explain that she would go fetch the boys, but the phone had cut out. The physiotherapy on his legs never worked. It hadn't been expected to. By the time he realized physiotherapy of a different kind was needed – the kind that might help save a marriage – it was too late. There was a certain irony that the divorce papers arrived the day the teenage driver was released for good behavior. The commuter train was near now, its speed still up but decreasing. Jack looked down at his mobility aid, and placed his hands on the wheels. He pushed, forward, and closed his eyes.

## **YOU TOO CAN BE A WINNER!**

### **CASH PRIZE SHORT STORY COMPETITION**

**NEXT CLOSING DATE 27TH AUGUST 2010**

**Members and non members of WordPlay can enter our open short story competition**

#### **First Prize**

**£75**

**publication in Ezine and Showcase Anthology, WordPlay Writing Accreditation**

#### **Second Prize**

**£25**

**WordPlay Writing Accreditation**

**Entries judged by judging panel,  
more details at**

**[www.wordplaywriters.com](http://www.wordplaywriters.com)**

[A few thoughts for you to ponder](#)

Beware: if it has tyres or testicles, it's gonna give you trouble...

A will is a dead give away.

Don't join dangerous cults. Practice safe sects.

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## WORDPLAY

### Writers' Forum

Intelligent, Interesting, Informative, Inspirational

#### How our internal competition works:

Any genre of writing is allowed.

The maximum length of work is 1,000 words of prose, or 40 lines of poetry.

Entries are judged by all the members of WordPlay, on an anonymous basis, so the winner is the piece most enjoyed by readers of writing.



## THE WORDPLAY INTERNAL WRITING COMPETITION WINNER

Theme: 'Heat'



### HELMAND HEAT by Gerry Wright

The midday heat at this time of the year was always intense. The sun shone from a clear sky scorching the earth and rendering the sand and dust far too hot to walk on with bare feet, but that was not the thing uppermost in Sergeant Mick Jones' mind as he dragged himself on his stomach across the burning sand of a tiny piece of Helmand Province in Afghanistan towards the area that had been marked out as a possible IED by the detector. The unit had immediately halted at the man's shouted warning. No one had moved but instead had dropped to their knees and looked around for anything that may indicate an area of disturbed ground. Sergeant Mick moved forward. Here we go again, he thought, the first one today let's hope it will be the last. Inching his way forward and keeping as close to the ground as possible, he swept the loose sand away from the top surface. As he did so, a hot breeze sprang up and drove the dust into his face. "Damn", he said aloud trying to spit the hot, gritty stuff out of his mouth. His eyes were protected by his goggles but he felt the salty sweat trickling down into them. The body armour he was wearing made his movements slow and difficult. His body heat increased as he lay in the full sun and he needed water. He paused to locate his canteen and from behind he heard Capt. Rogers call out, "What's the problem, sergeant?" "No problem, sir", he called out and then quietly, "I'm bloody thirsty, roasting alive and can't see a bloody thing through these goggles, otherwise no problem, sir. Now shut up and let me concentrate on this bomb". As he removed the top layers of sand with his bayonet; he often used his bayonet for this type of job, better than a large shovel to work with, it touched something metallic. Carefully, he pushed the blade deeper into the ground; still metal. "Oh shit", he muttered, "it looks like a big one, Mick. Any wires, I wonder". With great care, he dragged more sand away from what he soon discovered was a metal box about the size of a small suitcase. He continued to dig and reveal more of the device. "How's it going, sergeant?" the captain inquired from the rear, "We need to be on the move as soon as possible. We don't want to be sitting ducks, you know". Sergeant Mick gritted his teeth, sucked in another mouthful of dust, "Bollocks, sir", he said but not loud enough for 'sir' to hear. "It's *me* lying beside this sodding great box of explosives not you, so let me do my job and stay alive. Moments later, he located the wires he was expecting to find; two ran towards the centre of the road and two ran back past him towards his unit. His experience told him that this bomb was linked to others and when it exploded it would detonate them as well. He rolled onto his left side and with his right arm he gestured to those behind. "Get right back", he shouted, "there are more coupled with this one". The men moved back carefully and as quickly as they could. Sergeant Mick carried on working methodically. His aim was to isolate this piece of hardware from the others, that way the big one could be exploded and by following the wires, the others could be deactivated one by one. There was always the problem, though, of whether you could cut the wires without starting a 'November 5<sup>th</sup> party' too early. As he always seemed to do when disarming an improvised bomb, he thought of Jennie, his wife and their two little girls Hannah and Jess, why do I think of them every time? He wondered, but then decided it must be someone's way of encouraging him to concentrate even more. He also thought how stupid this war seemed to be. I'm here because they've found huge amounts of natural resources and some bloody politicians are going to get the rake-off. I'm not here fighting for Queen and Country, only for his mates. He was good at his job and they trusted him. Taking his pliers, he reached out his hand, "eany, meany, miney, mo", he thought, studying the wires. "Cut the black one, Mick", he said aloud. He always talked himself through these stressful times, it reassured him, talking to himself. "They're all black, you stupid bastard", he chided. "That black one then". "Oh, okay" He gritted his teeth, took a deep breath, and closed his eyes tight. Click, the wire parted; no explosion. "Now another black one". "Okay" Click; he was still alive. Very carefully he severed the rest of the wires, marking the run of each so that the other devices could be traced. Reaching into the bag he had dragged behind him, he pulled out the explosive charge he would use to detonate this bomb. Slowly and very precisely, he placed the charge where he knew it would be most effective. Next he inserted the detonator, connected up the wires which soon he would join up to his detonator box and slid away from the danger. As he reeled out the wire, he became aware of the sweat running in rivulets down his body under his clothing. Bloody marvellous, he thought, only another six hours to go in this heat. Having located the other bombs, he detonated the big one and then the others singly. Returning to the unit, he received the usual congratulations of a very relieved platoon. "Thanks, sarge, bloody well done", was all they ever said. All they ever needed to say. "Took rather a long time, sergeant", complained the officer in his young, cultured voice. "Yes sir, it did," said Sergeant Mick but added in his inimitable laconic fashion, "but I thought you could all do with the break".

No sooner is Summer here, than it seems to have flown by. Last month two of our writers looked at very different holiday locations. Here a third option is highlighted. Fancy a taste of nature? Why not follow John Edwards and see a different side of Spain?

### HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Holidays I don't have – well not in the accepted sense anyway. What is the point of going where everyone else is going? There are so many places that I still want to go to and I have no chance whatsoever of ever getting to the bottom of the list. I have no intention of waiting in hot sticky airports, queuing with overweight waddlers of all ages, the under-dressed, the over-dressed and those that look distinctly odd. Of course, to have the pleasure to stand with this assorted lot, you have to negotiate the doorway 'clingers'. Those inconsiderate addicts inhaling their fix and exhaling filth to contaminate others' lungs and clothing. To hell with them I am going somewhere else. Yes, I want to see Rome but I am not willing to pay €50 to enhance The Vatican's coffers. Yes, I want to see beauty and admire works of art. Yes, I want to go to New Zealand, The Faroes Isles, watch whales off Alaska and maybe, just maybe, I will do some of that. I came to Spain four years ago knowing that it was a big country ( or countries! ) and knowing too, that it had a plethora of things to see from Dali to snow capped sierras, from Roman amphitheatres to The Guadalquivir and The Ebro Delta, from mountain clinging on villages to the prairie lands of Andalucia. Enough, for any one and certainly a long enough list! So, where do I go? Well, I do what a lot of the natives do. They vacate 'Barca' and Madrid and head for the mountains with their vastness. Fortunately, some go elsewhere and that is good for me. I go to the largest Parques Nacionales en España.- Segura, Las Villas and Cazorla. This is the area which supplied timber for the galleons that attempted to deplete England of its' resources and was beaten back by a bunch of pirates – well the weather did help a bit! I go to where the eagles fly and where it's cool at night and there is freshness in the morning. This is the birthplace of rivers. This is where the Fuente de Segura with its' cold gushing waters force their way out and then fight their way to Guadamar. There are pine forests, deep gorges, twisting hair-pin roads, rock faces with mountain crags that cut a clear blue sky. This is where I go to where the Rio Berral gives 10 percent of its water direct to Murcia City. I want to be high in the sierra, off road, with good friends, seeing the vultures fly, and see deer and mouflon stare at us- the intruders. There are plenty of places to stay whilst you wonder at this idyll. Our regular haunt is Rosablanca B&B at Los Teatinos. I will be there again soon for the autumn migration. Join me?

**John Edwards**

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THE WORDPLAY INTERNAL POETRY COMPETITION WINNER

Theme: 'Heat'



ANONYMOUS LETTER **by** Mery Kilduff

How could you destroy my life this way  
With all the dreadful things you say  
You've taken it upon yourself  
To ruin my happiness and my health

You say my husband is untrue  
I can only hope it's not with you  
And although tears may fill my eyes  
To your bait I will not rise

I will not accuse my love  
Of something you have yet to prove  
So if your aim is for us to part  
I can tell you from the heart

This is something you will not see  
Because I love him and he loves me  
Till death us do part I made a vow  
So don't think you can end this now

You must live with your innate badness  
But I will recover from this sadness  
And I will build my life anew  
Who knows what will become of you

Anonymous letters are never kind  
I don't think that's what you had in mind  
When you decided to cause all this misery  
And send it out Anonymously

As you left no name or address  
I'm sending this to the local press  
I'm sure you'll read it and when you do  
You'll know just what I think of you

## TOMATO FURY

Every Saturday I go to the street market in Playa Flamenca looking for bargains and enjoying the atmosphere. I know most of the stallholders (Los dueños de unos puestos) and they know me. We exchange greetings and have a chat ¡Hola guapa! ¡buenas! ¿Qué tal? Etc. I like to buy my fruit and veg on the market because you can select it yourself. You just ask for a bag and they leave you to it. My usual lady was not there this Saturday so I went to another puesto close by but I hadn't seen this man before. I gave my usual greeting and smiled at him but no response, so I asked him for a bag and he reluctantly slapped one down in front of me, with a grunt. The usual practice is for them to walk away and serve somebody else whilst you fill your bag, but not him. He stood over me watching every move I made. Some of the tomatoes were a bit knocked or squashy so I tossed those on one side and put only the firm not quite ripe ones in my bag. I had almost selected what I knew from experience to be a kilo when he started shuffling the tomatoes about on the stall and throwing some on one side in imitation of my movements and chuntering away in Spanish. He didn't know that I understood every word he said. What he was saying, sprinkled liberally with palabrotas, was, "You can't feel all the tomatoes taking only the good ones, just put some in a bag and let me weigh them!" "¡No puedo tocar todos los tomates sólo pongalos en el bolso y me da los para pesar!" This was most unusual as most of the stallholders allow you to pick and choose as much as you like but he was expecting me to put bad ones in as well as good. What self-respecting Spanish housewife would do such a thing. The whole point of serving yourself is to pick the best. He was so aggressive that he got my dander up. People only treat you how you let them treat you and I wasn't having this rudeness. I upturned the bag's contents back onto the stall and told him in Spanish that he could get paxed and his tomatoes as well. I even used the tu form. "¡Vete a hacer puñetas y tus tomates tambien!" Then I turned and walked towards my husband who was waiting in the shade across the street. The next second I felt a tomato whizz past my head and land with a splodge on the ground. Then another just missed my shoulder. One landed at my feet. Another in a nearby stall. There were tomatoes flying everywhere and people ducking and diving, trying to get out of the way. I don't know if he was practising for the 'Tomatina' in Buñol on the last Wednesday of August but if he was he's a lousy shot. He didn't land a single one on me! My husband was watching in amazement as I weaved in and out dodging tomatoes and screaming with laughter. "What have you said now?" He knows me of old. "Nothing!" I replied innocently. "Just told him what to do with his tomatoes but it looks like he prefers them pistoed". It's what you might call Tomato Fury!"

**Mery Kilduff**

## JOINING THE UNTAMED

The hyenas – packs of them – amassed and gathered near the enclosure. They were edgy, eager, impatient, hungry and over heated....The morning was innocent enough. An already hot sun blazed down, and the air was filled with the sweet smell of wood-smoke and the cries and calls of birds in the nearby trees. In its eagerness to breach the enclosure, a more daring animal tried to push past the larger pack-leader, but its audacity was soon dealt with. There was a savage scuffle and dust rose up to form a small cloud as a great snarling noise erupted at the front of the pack which seemed to further inflame the other animals. Even at my safe distance, I could sense great danger. I grew uneasy and tense. My mouth was dry and perspiration wet my palms. The fact that it was getting as hot as Hades didn't help an iota. All at once – almost as if a starter had fired a gun – the packs surged forward as a gap appeared in the enclosure. With the scent of the prey in their nostrils, their eyes grew wild with greed, desire and hunger. Still aware, sweating profusely, I cautiously followed, with feelings so mixed they are difficult to describe...A curious, unpleasant desire to be in at the kill? Perhaps. I reached the opening in the enclosure and witnessed something I had never seen before. My eyes grew wide with disbelief as the scene unfolded before me. A scene somewhere in Africa maybe? No. Bargain morning at an electrical retail outlet. Our 'prey'? A TV set bought for a friend.

**Joy Lennick**



## Prevent Rogue Emails

Rogue emails are sent by you to your email contact list – but without your knowledge or you hitting the send button. This is because a virus has got into your system. Apart from regularly running good anti spyware and malware systems (search on Google); you can also help prevent this unwanted nuisance by taking the following steps: **NEVER forward emails without first removing all of the previous recipients.** When you click the forward button, you automatically have the option to edit and remove the entire list of previous recipients. This is good practise and helps stop rogue emails. Another good idea is set-up dummy email addresses in your contact list, but they must be the **FIRST** ones on the list. So open up your contact list and add a minimum of three dummy emails with AAAA (to make sure they are the first ones on your list) i.e. AAAA@hotmail.com Then if a virus tries to send from your list and the first three are invalid addresses it will abort. This is not guaranteed but it will not do any harm and only takes a minute.

## TON UP!

Let off steam in 100 words.... You choose the subject.

I want to rant about you (people) that must be ranting inwardly because I cannot hear you. Perhaps you go home and beat senseless cushions senseless or do you go home and swing flip-flop feet at imaginary cats? WordPlay Co-Founder, Ian, can rant about anything it would appear. For all our sakes, let it go. Let it all go and enjoy. I don't see any shame in you thinking that I am annoyed about everything because I am not. What about when you stub your toe on the leg of the bed when you are dashing for the bathroom? I bet that gets you!

**John Edwards**

Ian would like to point out that he is not an unhappy person!

**Show don't tell with collective nouns.**

**How about these?**

An assemblance of jigsaw puzzles

An attitude of teenagers

A bevy of alcoholics

A billow of smokers

A chapter of authors



## WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Our members review their latest read.

### NINE DRAGONS by MICHAEL CONNELLY

Michael Connelly is one of my favourite authors, and one of those that have been the greatest inspiration in my writing. His Harry Bosch series is already legendary in the genre of the detective thriller, and so it was that I bought my paperback copy of 'Nine Dragons' with relish and unrelenting anticipation. Bosch is appointed lead investigator in the murder of a Chinese newsagent in Los Angeles. With just a single clue indicating Triad involvement and an apparent leak meaning the prime suspect is always one step ahead of him, our hero's life is turned upside down when he receives a video by text showing his estranged daughter, Maddie, who lives in Hong Kong, held captive. Bosch suspects this to be a warning against further involvement in the case and travels to the Chinese province to rescue her, enlisting the help of Eleanor Wish, ex-FBI agent and Maddie's mother, and her current, ex-Triad boyfriend. Away from the familiar surroundings of his home city, Bosch takes with him his hard nosed, old school cop attitude and blends it with the desperation of a father seeking his daughter in a race against time. Connelly paints vivid pictures of not only mindsets, but also the concrete jungle of Hong Kong whilst weaving the plot in and out and building it to a breathtaking crescendo. Classic Connelly, brutal Bosch, and another must read for any aficionado of this genre. The only disappointment that I have had with any of Connelly's books is that they have to end, and this one did not fail the anticipation I felt prior to its reading. In my writing career, by reading Connelly I continue to learn from the modern day master.

**Michael Barton**



**John Edwards, who leads WordPlay's poetry section, gives his personal view of last month's poems submitted by Roberta, and then replies with a couple of his own. Could this be the start of an "Ezine Poetry Slam"?**

Following on from Roberta's 'A Rainbow of Brollies', which is so descriptive, so simple, and still left the reader with his or her own thoughts. It shows that with a little bit of observation that you can have a few lines based on the premise 'keep it simple'. Challenges can work and in Roberta's case she has come up with her 'A Rainbow of Brollies'.

In April I was waiting at Alicante Airport. I looked around and I made a few notes and a sketch to aid my memory for a quieter moment. This is what I saw.

### Airport Lounge - Alicante

Large windows still frame  
runway and mechanisation

palm trees, grey in morning  
mist – windows reflect

a reversed image – imposed  
over liveries blue, red, silver

stationary planes noiseless  
behind glaze – waiting

black darting 'swifts'  
on the wing – feeding

Whilst rain, thunder and lightening entertained me one evening, I wrote this.

### Storm Watching

a blue sky dissipates  
greyness comes  
clouds gather slowly

a breeze feels its way  
around corners to  
refresh a cheek.

we wait, faint rumbles  
dogs' ears twitch  
slightly in response.

two tone grey clouds  
litter the sky. Erratic  
edges tease a pattern.

mesmorising flashes  
draw the eye and  
deeper rumblings call

noise all around  
steady rain falls  
cascades off edges

fresh smell  
of summer rain  
arouses the senses

blackness envelopes  
flashes turn  
black to bright

splash of tyres  
on urban road  
night rumbles on

## WORDPLAY: OPENING DOORS FOR POETS WORLDWIDE

**We are looking for poets to contribute their work to this Ezine. Why not become a member of WordPlay and have your words read around the world? Keep an eye on [www.wordplaywriters.com](http://www.wordplaywriters.com) and our other publications for details.**



**A Simpleton**

A meek and modest man  
No sense of personal gravitas  
Often sticks his tongue out  
To tease his long-suffering wife.

Hard sciences eluded him  
Did well on IQ tests  
Worked long in menial jobs  
Was sacked from a few of these.

Gained late in life an education  
A couple of modest degrees  
Limited work opportunities  
Meant earnings well below the norm.

Somehow survived till retirement  
Made his way to sunny Spain  
The best thing that ever happened to him  
Was to join the Word Play Forum.

**Migel Jayasinghe**

If an octopus has eight legs why are they called tentacles?

A backward poet writes inverse.

**The 5 W's in Rhyme**

I write within the depths of my soul  
Perfect poetry my ambitious goal  
The dark comes forth to light  
And in moments a poem I write

Then when I come to put pen to paper  
I find the task a different caper  
When seeing the words I think  
Now ideas made concrete in ink

One thing I've learnt from the group  
WordPlay  
Is to write whatever I want to say  
For time is short, tick and tock  
Writing quick, I've lost my writer's block

**Roberta**

For all you lexophiles

Acupuncture - A jab well done.

Atheism is a non-prophet organisation.

When cannibals ate a missionary, they got a taste  
of religion.

If you jump off a Paris bridge, you are in Seine.

I wondered why the cricket ball was getting  
bigger. Then it hit me.

*Thanks to Joy Lennick for supplying this month's snippets.*

To advertise here contact  
**Wordplay**  
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[wordplayenquiries@mail.com](mailto:wordplayenquiries@mail.com)

# NEWS FROM WORDPLAY AND ITS MEMBERS

## WORDPLAY – WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

We hope you enjoy our monthly publication, the content of which is provided by WordPlay members and competition winners and read around the world.

You'll find each issue packed with a variety of great writing, from short stories to poetry, as well as valuable tips for writers, and regular features such as the A2Z of Words.

WordPlay also offers a **comprehensive range of services** to suit all, and we are adding to these all the time. See here for more information:

<http://www.wordplaywriters.com/servicesforwriters.html>

WordPlay Members can take advantage of **huge discounts of up to 50% on all our services**, as well as access member only pages and submit contributions to our publications. This link provides you with more information:

<http://www.wordplaywriters.com/membership.html>

### The WordPlay Short Story Competition

Our monthly short story competition is open to all, with a first prize of £75 and publication of the winning entry in the Ezine and end of year anthology. Entry is free to WordPlay members, £5 to non-members. Find out how to enter here:

<http://www.wordplaywriters.com/writingcompetitions.html>

Finally, as part of our main aim of encouraging writers to write, and then to get them read, we will be developing **a range of e-courses**, the first of which (Creative Writing) is available here:

<http://www.wordplaywriters.com/id30.html>

Each issue of the WordPlay Ezine is delivered to your email account at the beginning of the second week of the month. Please read and enjoy, and feel free to post onto your contacts, and print off a copy to place in your local bar, café, sports club, etc.

# **STOP PRESS!**

## **EZINE HAS A SISTER**

**Here at WordPlay, we love great fiction. We also love to promote great fiction, particularly stories penned by (as yet) unknown talent. We also love to reward writers of great fiction.**

**So, we thought it would be a great idea to give great writers of great fiction an outlet, and reward them for their efforts.**

**This is where our new quarterly publication, working title “The story behind the story”, comes in.**

**We want YOU to submit stories of between 1500 and 2500 words, in any genre from thrillers to romance, murder mystery to humorous (excluding erotica).**

**Add in a 100 word biography, written in the third person, and a couple of sentences about the inspiration that led to the writing of your story.**

**For each story submitted by a WordPlay member, and accepted for publication, we will pay £10.**

**All stories accepted for publication from non members will be rewarded with a WordPlay Writing Accreditation for the author.**

**Initial circulation will be to subscribers of the WordPlay monthly Ezine, and selected Literary Agents.**

**Closing Date for submission for the first edition is 30th November 2010, with and expected edition date of January 6th 2011.**

**For more information see our website [www.wordplaywriters.com](http://www.wordplaywriters.com)**

### Member News

**Gareth Turpie** has now written 21 out of 55 episodes of the radio soap “Conway Street”. For more information copy and paste this link to your web browser: <http://www.expressfm.com/ExpressFMShows/ConwayStreet/tabid/362/Default.aspx>

**Congratulations to Migel Jayasinghe** who has had two poems published in “The Coastrider”, and been commissioned to write another. A regular contributor to this Ezine, his poem “Shot in the Dark” is receiving the acclaim we believe it should.

## **THE FIVE W's OF WRITING**

**WordPlay member Georgia Varjas tells us her five W's.**

**WHERE DO I WRITE?** Noisy cafes are the best, music and chatter inspire, catch a word here or there, a new phrase or an old saying. In cities, trains, buses, queues, long concerts, they all make excellent places to eavesdrop. Sitting somewhere to watch the world go by.

**WHEN DO I WRITE?** Mornings are good, take the bike, and find a suitable café or bench where life moves. Then again, as I almost always carry a pencil, I write when inspired.

**HOW DO I WRITE?** Pencil and paper, must have a pencil with a rubber attached. Notebooks and scrap paper for inspired words and first drafts then onto the computer. Print it out read out loud, fix and edit with a pencil, rewrite as many times as needed before retyping on my Mac.

**WHY DO I WRITE?** I have to express my thoughts, feelings and reactions. It used to be music and dance, now it is words. It just comes naturally, an extended form of speaking.

**WHAT DO I WRITE?** Plays, performed in fringe theatres in UK. Short stories stacked away. (Must pull them out and re read, rewrite; see if any are suitable for your eyes!) A novel finished and stored in the fridge, preserved for later. Poems for performance and publication. Poems are my favoured format, short, condensed, sharp, hard, political, cynical, humorous, silly and sometimes good.

**Georgia Varjas**

### **OVER TO YOU.....**

Tell us your five W's of writing.

Email them to [wordplayezine@mail.com](mailto:wordplayezine@mail.com)

#### **WORDPLAY CONTACT DETAILS**

**For inclusion on Ezine email list**  
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**To make contact with any writer published within**  
[wordplayenquiries@mail.com](mailto:wordplayenquiries@mail.com)

# A TO Z OF WORDS

## PLAY WITH WORDS

## This Month: SHAKESPEARE

- A- All's well that ends well unless you are a character in any of Shakespeare's tragedies as you will die before the curtain falls.
- B- Bear (a) pursuing Antigonus in act II, scene III in A Winters Tale. It must be hard to find a real bear that can act.
- C- Capulet's, one of the warring families in Romeo and Juliet
- D- Duncan – King of Scotland, murdered by Macbeth.
- E- Elizabeth I, Queen of England, one of Shakespeare's most well known and supportive fans.
- F- Facts, some of Shakespeare's plays have historical facts mixed in with fiction.
- G- Gloucester – Earl of – Loses his eyes in King Lear, they are gouged out.
- H- Hamlet – responsible for numerous deaths including his best friends, girlfriend and his mother. He gradually goes mad and in the end dies.
- I- Iago - Hates his boss Othello for not promoting him so convinces Othello that his wife is having an affair.
- J- Juliet – Falls in love with the wrong man and then dies. Perhaps a lesson to us all!!
- K- King Lear – Forces his children to compete for his fortune and then loses everything including his life and his children.
- L- Lysander – Hermia's love interest in A Midsummer Nights Dream and he is disliked by her father.
- M- Macbeth - Murderer, a fan of witchcraft and power crazy who becomes riddled with guilt.
- N- Nurse - Juliet's companion who always reminds me of Nursey in Blackadder.
- O- Othello – Moor of Venice and jealous husband of Desdemona
- P- Porter – Drunk and in charge of the gate house in Macbeth.
- Q- Quince – Peter, not a fruit but a bit of a fruit and nut case and an actor in the play within a play in A Midsummer Nights Dream.
- R- Rosencrantz – one of Hamlets best friends. He and his other friend Guildenstern die in a play by Tom Stoppard and also in Hamlet.
- S- Shylock – a Jewish merchant who wants his pound of flesh in payment of a debt in A Merchant of Venice.
- T- Tragedies - There are eleven of these and I have lost count of the number of deaths there are in total.
- U- Ulysses – A character in Troilus and Cressida and a famous book by James Joyce.
- V- Viola – dresses as a man, Cessario and falls in love with her boss who is also in love with her but believes she is a man. Cross dressing is common in Shakespeare.
- W- Widow - old or A. Minor characters.
- X- eXtras – Some scenes were apparently written by other actors or playwrights and were added at a later time.
- Y- Yorick – Usually represented by a skull and appears with Hamlet.
- Zzzzzz – Many people fall asleep during performances as the plays can be 4 hours or more in length. Top tip if you do doze off: do not snore and make sure the director is not sitting behind you.

**Michelle Edwards**