

THE JAGGED PATHS TO CREATIVE WRITING

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Hi, everyone, I'm currently doing a creative writing essay and some say writing is a socially acceptable form of schizophrenia that only attacks creative workers. Some hip-hop icons of all-time literary luminaries scare saying it's a vampire's weak and weary curse... a vicious onslaught to make me feel pained. Hearing this gagged and bound I lay naked in the sticky substance of my inner rage. Coldness runs through the veins of contempt. I couldn't blame them for this sickness, but I learn a lesson. I learn that when people strike out to hurt you, they reveal their own pain. Some people complain about the inequity of life, cursing God and raging against the pain they have suffered. Some people use life's experiences as a crutch to excuse them for any past, present or future failures. I choose to take control of my own life, casting away crutches and anger. I think of this world as a classroom where the instructors sometimes lack refinement and the lessons aren't always easy, but you live and learn. Others argue that it doesn't exist at all. But I believe that we are all part of the creative continuum and I am sure that there are different doses and dilutions of creativity. We are not all the same and we do not have the same aptitudes or talents. I can't make you a writer. What I can do is show you how to strip a piece of text like dismantling an engine- and put it back and see why it roars or purrs. My own method is oily rag and spanners. To me, the greatest pleasure of writing is not what it's about, but the inner music that words make.

Creativity is about making internal visions and

dreams actual in the physical world. The creative need motivates achievement, and the attainment of all goals. It is about being the most complete form of your spiritual self and acting it out upon the world in truly unique and valuable ways. Creativity is an ability often thought to be limited only to artists and musicians. But this is a far too narrow way of thinking about creative self-expression. For each and every action, each word, and each motion is an outward creative reflection of the inner creative spirit. Those expressions that reflect limits of mind, of course, will also be apparent. Any such inadequacies, however, will in turn elicit the necessary feedback, once the feelings are understood. Then, with accurate interpretations of, and responses to the emotional signals, the inadequate beliefs of mind will gradually give way to better versions, such that each and every action becomes the creative expression of true spirit. Creative expression melds the spiritual values of self-development and expression into the motive to achieve bigger and better results; to build a mindscape of knowledge, skills and abilities to express and create in all realms or find success in a wide variety of challenging environments. If creativity and growth is stifled, boredom will surely set in as a spiritual reminder toward continuous evolution and expression. The creative expression of such a spirit would consistently exhibit joyous, spontaneous, meaningful, cooperative and exuberant thoughts, words, movements, actions and interactive deeds.

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Any other types of expression still contain the effects of a limited mindscape, with negative emotional experiences and responses asking for the needed corrections toward this ideal spiritual existence of creative expression in flesh. Thus, each and every human being has the inborn need to express one's self. This is experienced as an inner understanding or knowingness regarding one's universal value. It is also the irresistible urge to do whatever is necessary to know that valuable self, to develop that self, and to go forth and share that self with the world. The sense of committed contribution springs from this urge to create. That inner inspiration to achieve, to change the world, to make it a better place, springs from the spiritual creative need.

The work ethic that has built civilizations is based on the need to create. The need to create motivates individuals to go to work each day and leave their unique mark upon the world. And each creation, no matter how seemingly insignificant in human terms, holds tremendous value and cosmic significance in the spiritual realm.

One of the truisms of *creative writing* is that creative writing I know is a highly graceless and in some quarters a highly suspect term-borrowed from America for want of a better, and very possibly a contradiction in theoretical terms. We don't really speak of creative music or creative painting, so why do we talk of creative writing? I suspect the unholy term arises from a conflation of two ideas: one meaning imaginative writing or fictional writing, writing done for a fictive as opposed to an expository purpose; and the other meaning the study of the process of literary composition. What is clear-it may be one reason why the whole idea was often unpopular-is that it's an American term describing an American notion, an element in an academic syllabus where the literature course is divided into two elements: historical literary study on the one hand, and composition and 'creative writing,' sometimes defined as 'rhetoric,' on the other.

Today is the first day of my "Writing Vacation" and I have decided to try my hand at some creative writing. You can be my guinea pig if I find the answer to- what do I write? My thoughts are mingling, swimming, and jamming together but yet my mind goes completely blank. It is now 1500 (or 3pm) and I have been at it since 1000. (10am). I have learned, what most writers have learned, to keep their sanity.

A: WRITING IS SPIRIT, MUSE ETCETERA- There is a passion that stirs within. It whispers... "Write" at other times it shouts or yells "WRITE DAMMIT". Either way it is not invoked by the writee, more the writer invokes the writee. Perhaps you are spirits muse ... Hmmm

B: WRITERS HAVE THEIR OWN CONCEPT OF TIME- Meaning we write when it suits us. To accomplish any writing it is important to the writer that he/she figures that out in the beginning. For myself, I have found that having 20 something men in my abode, is not conducive to afternoon writing trysts. So, I need to work my writing about their sleep schedules. i.e. anytime after 0300 (3am) or before 1200 (noon). Ideal.

C: SETTING THE MOOD- A glass of wine, candle light music. Yes, much like a romantic evening, writers set the mood. According to the story they wish to channel. For instance if, I was weaving my novel based in Scotland, well I would listen to bagpipes and drink tea, and perhaps wear a kilt while writing ;-). Or if I am writing a story set in the 40's I would listen to music popular in that time period, to transport me to that era musically. Movies are a great transportation tool. There are many movies out there, in many genres. For anyone's taste. Meditation is often overlooked as a writer's channel. I adore it. It puts this busy minded boy in the right mood. Open to spirit, to meander down mossy paths I never would have considered. Which is the basis of any Great piece of writing? Breaks are instrumental. Backs, Bladders and hands

appreciate the time to recoup and regroup. I usually take a break every couple hours or so. 15 to 30 minutes to get out and check the mail, let the dog out, etc.

D: TONE- Yes tone as in loud or quiet. It depends, on who is doing the writing. I used to need quiet. Today I find I just need to tune others voices OUT. Perhaps I could learn something from Men here eh? Just joking. Do not deny me humor, Please. I find that listening to my mp3 player with headphones drowns most noise out. Utilizing noise cancelling speakers is respectful to your family.

E: LAST BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, IS WHERE TO WRITE- If you have a laptop, this could be anywhere and everywhere. If you are like me, at this point you are strapped to your desktop. So make the area, as you like. This is your space. Hopefully conducive to writing. If not, why the heck not? Take some time and ponder that if you are the latter. Are YOU interfering with your writing capabilities? Are you denying your muse? Gosh, I hope not. But if you are, do not fret. The challenge is solvable, quite easily. Simply clean your work space. Let this place be a mirror of inspiration. Reflecting back at its enchantress. Bills have no place on or around your desk. Nor do Tax or work projects. This is your creative HAVEN. Treat it with honor. More writing wisdom to come.

I love writing and my life has been a kaleidoscope of new understandings and changing patterns. I love the swirl and swing of words as they tangle with human emotions. No one means all he says, and yet very few say all they mean, for words are slippery and thought is viscous. Writing a novel is not merely going on a shopping expedition across the border to an unreal land: it is hours and years spent in the factories, the streets, the cathedrals of the imagination. It's funny that as I sit here trying to decide on a topic for my writing, I find my mind drifting down the dark path to memories that I have caged and guarded closely

so that they don't escape. Memories that I have worked and labored my whole life to keep submerged in the dark recesses of my subconscious. Vivid dreams of a hauntingly beautiful, half-familiar world troubled my sleep. The memories of my early childhood are like scattered, partially lost pieces of a huge mosaic. It seems that writing from this level of consciousness opens me to genuine creativity. The everyday world is seen from a different angle, and natural pathways appear to "bridge the gap" between the mundane and what is commonly called omnipresence. Call it the infinite matrix, the Holy Spirit, a quantum... but the first step leading there seems to be to get past, or see through semantical detours-the world of words in their culture-driven labyrinths of obliterated meanings. Reality at the level of higher self supersedes cultural terminologies and lays bare a field of unity. Historical, ego-based reference points falling slowly to obsolescence bequeath us the Golden Rule-Universal Law resulting from dethronement of egoistic autonomy. What attributes of mind open to us in this new field of thought-this "new" relativity? Baby steps. But to where do they lead? Are we presenting to ourselves proof of the law that we reap what we sow? The chaos of the world echoes the chant of the ancients-"Know thyself".

Stupefied and bewildered I looked uncertainly about the mystery, the beauty of the world's awakening. I very vividly recall how on weekends, I write anything obscure, anything weird and wonderful, I love clowns and angels, mermaids and witches, a man half goat, half human. Blood sucking vampires in the dead of night, the fairy realm dancing to the firefly's light. Best of all I love my dragons, those majestic winged beasts exuding power and glory, and a daffodil white unicorn with her deep blue eyes, would be a glorious creature to write about. As long as you 'feel' your character, be it adult, child, beast or gnome, then write, keep writing, don't stop, and inspire your readers to find some escape, from

their lives, into your dreams. I am an abstract artist, a concrete analyst, and a ruthless bookie.

This is something I wrote a few months ago, I don't really remember under what circumstances, but it helped me to calm down: There is no everything. There is no one thing, one piece. One little unanswered question that will reveal the nature of the workings of everything because there is no everything. Everything is everything, nothing is everything, everything is nothing, nothing is nothing, nothing is everything is everything is nothing. It's all the same. There is only the removal of questions, the acceptance of reality. Only once accepted can it be changed as it needs be. If I fear my reality, if I hate my reality, if I tell myself I am trapped by my reality. Then I am. I realize that things feel this way at times. But when I succumb to those feelings as ways of thinking, I become them, I live them. I must not see them as way of thinking. These are emotions, fears. Fear is only as powerful as I let it be. Emotions are only as permanent as I want them to be. I am my own fears. I have no fear until I will fear to exist. I have nothing until I will allow it to exist, if I am feeling doubt, I willed it to exist. If I am afraid, it is because either I want to be, or I am not putting forth enough effort to want to be some way else. Reality is a subjective experience and experience is all that matters. I must take in all the experience my brain can tolerate, out of every possible moment in every possible scenario, in every waking second. I must continue to excel and improve and evolve beyond my current understanding of myself. Reality of everything. I must persist in my efforts despite continual exhaustion, they are all that matter. Without them, or a lack of them, I would have no center to focus on, be it negative or positive. I would have no existence.

I have always prided myself for being nutty as a fruitcake and firmly believed that my craziness and eccentricity accentuated my individuality. Perhaps I was unknowingly proving it right as I grew up. I put a total full stop to my countless

childhood pranks like scaling walls and crushing ice, remodeling train stations on my lunch breaks, making them more efficient in the area of heat retention, translating ethnic slurs for Cuban refugees, writing award-winning operas and managing time efficiently. I was an expert in synthetic stucco, could love fervently, and an outlaw in India. I was an abstract artist, accustomed to conquer, gifted by birthright with an audacious confidence and a ruthless bookie. Critics worldwide swooned over my original line of corduroy evening wear. I don't perspire. I am a private citizen, yet I receive fan mail. I once read *Being and nothingness*, *Mill on the floss*, and *Portrait of a marriage in one day* and still had time to refurbish my poky little bed room that evening. I want to write, create and read dreadful dumb and glorious books, and then let them wrestle in beautiful fights inside my head, vulgar one moment, brilliant the next. I wish to lurk in libraries and climb the stacks like ladders to sniff books like perfumes and wear books like hats upon my crazy head. I even wish to have a wrestling match with my Creative Muse that will last a lifetime. I wish craziness and foolishness and madness upon me. May I live with hysteria, and out of it make fine stories-science fiction or otherwise.

In my childhood bedroom, my collages bloomed like an azalea over two entire closet doors. I would sit on my mauve carpeting for hours snipping things from magazines: words that spoke to me, images of the life I wished I was living, resurrecting my childhood hobby. I had forgotten how much joy I'd gotten out of those writings until taking Professor Larry Grobel's Literature of Journalism class. Hearing him talk of his experiences as a freelance writer and reading the classic, Pulitzer-prize-winning stories of years past helped me realize that the written word was something I wanted to help create, rather than simply consume. This is not to say I will indulge in the cardinal sin of beginning writers to pen incessantly and heroically about themselves. But

it does mean I will continue to explore this past for insights into my own self, and how the events of that past might illustrate themes and values that others may identify with. I decided I had to make some serious changes. I really didn't want to spend my adult years wearing orange pajamas. It's something that happened gradually. It was some time during high school I realized that I liked writing. I can't remember the exact timing of it, but we did a term of creative writing in English class, and I discovered that I liked making stuff up. Creative writing programs are bombing right now and from that point, my interest grew by leaps and bounds.. It was not until much later that it occurred to me that I might be able to make a career out of it. Over the past few years, I focused on writing the best articles I could, and I avoided using sneaky search engine optimization tricks. I made a point that each genre in writing has its own quirks and niches and literary writers like me tend to get into the nooks and crannies of writing. Both in and out of academia, I had for some time been composing stuff that loosely qualified as poetry. From the declamatory rants I foisted on audiences between rock songs to the slightly more disciplined stanzas I produced for my creative writing classes, I worked hard at the craft and wanted it to become as necessary to me as food. I gradually shifted my self-perception from "hobby writer" to "freelance author." I like the term "freelance" because it doesn't just pertain to business or copy writers--it refers to any creative writer (fiction and literary writers included) who aren't bound by exclusive contracts or the limitations of employment. Hey. If writing is work, I want a real title to go with it. I am also struggling to write fiction which I believe is a heavyweight championship of writing. Maybe I got this macho idea from my mother who is a sculptress and also a terrific story teller. For years it has nagged me and I don't feel quite complete as a writer.

Creativity involves breaking out of established patterns in order to look at things in a different

way. In order to succeed in the major it is important to have an appetite, a passion for reading and writing and enjoy the growing pains of writing. We often think of writers as special creatures who possess magical knowledge or are influenced by mystical muses hidden and inaccessible to everyone else. However, when asked to discuss the experience of writing, authors often respond with figurative comparisons: writing is like building a house, pulling teeth, pounding a wall, riding a wild horse, conducting an exorcism, throwing a lump of clay on a potter's wheel, performing surgery on yourself without anesthesia. Good writing doesn't just magically appear on paper. There is no secret. But there is a process. Today when I'm doing this creative writing essay, many say it's an incurable disease that only attacks creative workers. Some say it's a goddamn curse. Others argue that it doesn't exist at all since it has been maligned, neglected, and misunderstood. It is nurturing doubts and uncertainties, my blank spots and my questions. Then how does one live like a writer? Who can be classified as a writer? And most importantly, can we define the writer's experience, which is often as tangible as it is elusive? What can literary works, from the past and today, reveal about the writer's experience and the writing process? To what extent may composition instructors systematize the writing process? How can educators nurture and develop their students' identity as writers? What linguistic choices do writers make when portraying regional, ethnic, socioeconomic, or gendered characterizations in fiction, and are those choices conscious ones or more instinctive?

I know what I want to say. If the new writing phenomenon is to be positive it needs to be bold. I believe that we are all part of the creative continuum, but I am sure that there are different doses and dilutions of creativity. The creative spirit speaks to us in many ways, and across time and geography, and it is good to feel we are connected in this way, nourished by the work of

others in creating our own images, which in turn might inspire or touch more people, an infinite “web”. We are not all the same and we do not have the same aptitudes or talents. I can't make you a writer. What I can do is show you how to strip a piece of text like dismantling an engine- and put it back and see why it roars or purrs. My own method is oily rag and spanners. Words and how they work is what interests me.

It is said that Leonardo da Vinci before ever lifting his brush saw all his paintings in the damp stains on his walls. Herman Melville stared at Mount Grey lock every day until one day it turned into devilish great white whale Moby Dick. Our richest work invariably results from mining our most vivid and powerful childhood and adolescent memories. In our young imaginative years we look up at the clouds and see old women, fairy, houses, alligators, and dinosaurs rather than constellations. According to biologists, man can no longer be defined as different from other animals by virtue of speech or tool making. But we are absolutely unique in our dazzling ability to make metaphors. Creativity is the art of living metaphorically. Creativity is a magic wand that works two ways. When you set it in action and seek to create something, it does not just brings into existence that object or work, it also raises in your heart a dream, a hope, and a will to achieve that creation. And when all else seems lost and steeped in hopelessness, the magic of creativity can still keep you going. For when all else seem dark, an urge to create something would still give you an aim to look forward to. And if you just take hold of this urge, it will take hold of you and see you through even the darkest times. Like it did to me.

Most children enter school with a natural interest in writing, an inherent need to express themselves in words. Couple this with a child's love of stories and nursery rhymes-who has not seen a goggle-eyed group of kindergartners lost in the world of imagination as their teacher reads them a favorite story or nursery rhyme? The

memories of my early childhood are like scattered, partially lost pieces of a huge mosaic. As long as I can remember ever since I have had the ability to understand it, I have been fascinated by the English language. As a child, I would either be writing, reading or telling stories and ever since then, have read a wide variety of both fiction and non-fiction texts from a variety of genres and eras..I have always been fascinated by the way writers can influence, and even manipulate readers' emotions by their expression of thoughts, and by their ability to encourage the expansion of our imaginations and understanding. I have always gravitated towards becoming a writer, the only thing I was fit for. This notion rested solely on my suspicion that I would never be fit for real work, and that writing didn't require any. False friendships, failed relationships, expectations, mood swings-life is otherwise bitter in this 'pressure-cooker' world. Challenging myself with writing exercises on a regular basis was crucial to my development as an artist. In my childhood, there was a respect for and delight in language well used; also, an awareness of sunken languages, still spoken by some local people: Indian languages, North and South Indian languages, etc.

Writing isn't something handed down from a big brain in an ivory tower-that's the academy, not the rough and tumble of creativity. Writing is a conversation, sometimes a fist-fight and a winding professional adventure. It is democratic. Writing has always been a major part of my life, especially writing poetry which acted as a therapeutic remedy for me being able to deal with family issues and being diagnosed with systemic lupus. Being a poet is one of the unhealthier jobs-no regular hours, so many temptations! People write for many different reasons but I write because I was born to. I write in my sleep, on the bus and everywhere I go. In summer even I write at the kitchen table because it's the only room in the house with a ceiling fan and where I can be quiet and still and listen to

the voices inside myself. It is my God-given passion and talent filled with insecurities, passions, and beauty to use and share with the world. My eleventh grade, English exam essay brings back fond memories. We were given a couple of topics to write essays on for our English Exam. Mine turned out to be one of the best and my English teacher not only gave an “excellent” comment on the answer sheet but read out the essay in front of the whole class and an enthusiastic applause followed. Writing somehow tends to move us from a position of one-dimensional certainty about a topic to a more ambiguous or even confused state-and that is mind-enlarging .Can you think of anything more that could have boosted a teenager’s self esteem? Truly my five minutes of fame.

In elementary school, I started writing short stories, and in junior high I moved on to poems. I used to work on my writing late into the night with uncharacteristic discipline and single-minded focus, my typing hands lit up by the harsh white light of the computer monitor. My works are metaphor and irony, storyteller and prankster. I hope they evoke: humor, hope, joy, peace, Moments of Reverence. A butterfly represents the preciousness and fragility of all life. A door, life’s possibilities. I enjoy finding puns like the “Gobble, Gobble” turkey cupcakes and curious juxtapositions such as “Cock’s Comb” with the rooster who is at once upstaging and foreshadowing the spiky Mohawk man at a poultry exhibit. I remember every member of my right-brained family reading my writing and telling me it was wonderful, encouraging me to write more and to develop my talent. I used to get drafts back from my dad, covered with suggestions, compliments, and questions in his nearly illegible troll handwriting. I eventually started writing long stories and then found websites that took stories under consideration for publication online. When they were accepted, it gave me newfound confidence in my ability to write. “Isn’t the writing of good prose an

emotional excitement?” Yes, of course it is. At least, when I get the thing dead right and know it's dead right, there's no excitement like it. It's marvelous. It makes me feel like God on the Seventh Day-for a bit, anyhow.” If the artist does not fling himself, without reflecting, into his work, as Curtis flung himself into the yawning gulf, as the soldier flings himself into the enemy's trenches, and if, once in this crater, he does not work like a miner on whom the walls of his gallery have fallen in; if he contemplates difficulties instead of overcoming them one by one... he is simply looking on at the suicide of his own talent.

I was obsessed with books from a very early age and could read long before I started school. I was always a bit of a loner and books became my escape from the world and I devoured everything I could get my hands on. At school the librarian was very fierce and would not lend books to children if she felt they were “too grown up”. I used to hide books like Bram Stoker’s Dracula under the shelves so that I could snuggle up in the library and read them. I always vowed that if I was ever a librarian I would never be so mean-spirited-and I don’t think I am but you’d have to ask the children! I constantly wrote my own stories and poems and filled countless notebooks with them. I still have some of those stories and, to be honest, they are not bad. Writing is like sex; you don’t have to wait until you’re an expert to begin doing it. Almost all good writing begins with terrible first efforts. You need to start somewhere. I believe any person who keeps working is not a failure. He may not be a great writer, but if he applies the old-fashioned virtues of hard, constant labor, he'll eventually make some kind of career for himself as writer. Therefore, I was told to write a book and after taking consideration I have decided I would write one called The Beast and the False Beauty. The book will identify the devil and the prostitute that gave birth to him. After years of research and personal experience I have concluded that our

souls are thoughts in the mind of god (Oversoul). Just as we are self aware as creations, our thoughts are self aware to degree but not as self aware as the soul (Pure awareness) that created the thought. This makes all thoughts an intelligence that when held (feed awareness) for an extended period of time can grow in it's intelligence. This book will identify the two mis-intelligences (demonic entities or incorrect beliefs) that have held most souls on earth imprisoned and shackled by their attachments to the objects of this world. The beast (the devil) I believe is the illusion of lack (spiritual incompleteness, poverty, or suffering (Dukkha)). It is the belief that in order to be happy, you need something outside of the soul. When truly the soul is pure peace and desires nothing more than peace of mind (which the devil will never have and the reason he wants our souls so bad). This is a widely fed into believe in society as many people feel incomplete without jobs, cars, and family. Sadly to say they settle for so much less when they can have so much more (Infinite kingdom of god). The false beauty in the book is the prostitute that sits atop the beast in the book of revelations. Her mis-intelligence (incorrect belief) is the illusion of separation (Ignorance (Avidyā), Forbidden fruit of the knowledge of good vs. evil). Without the illusion of separation the illusion of lack would not be born and I usually say that ignorance (Illusion of separation) is the mother of all sins. What do you guys think? My sleep and waking dreams have been filled lately, by a myriad of spiraling energies, as I awaken to the infinite possibilities of writing a book. Once the door of self discovery has been opened there is no going back even when you aren't aware of it you are waking from the inside the pace of this growth varies but never stops it may even seem as though you are going in reverse but this is a part of the process of awareness at least this has been true for me.

Reading and writing are closely related and it is assumed that reading naturally precedes writing.

Any writing is like a piece of furniture, has its own set of requirements, laws of constructions that have to be learnt. I love a good literary moustache and am ready to spend hours reading pearls of wisdom dropped by the great intellectual heavyweights. So much so, I've put together a collection of my all-time favourites! From the Walrus to the Mexican, and the Handlebar to the Horseshoe, it seems there is no end to the amount of creative facial topiary in the literary world... Something tells me Shakespeare set a trend. "Literary style is like crystal-ware: the cleaner the wineglass, the brighter the brilliance. As a reader, I agree with those who believe that a colour of the dress, which a character has on, as well as any enumeration and description of dishes at dinner or in the kitchen should be mentioned only in case if all this has a strong consequent relation to the plot, but as an author, I can't help mentioning all this, with no particular reason, just for love for my characters, desiring to give them something nice and pleasant. Melancholy grows a platinum rose. Affection grows a double rose. One of our privileges as creative writers is that we are vulnerable people who hold jobs in an environment where self-protection is a way of life. Our vulnerability can be enjoyable, perhaps even enviable. In some ways it is phony. I confess I'm not nearly as naïve as I sometimes appear, and the innocence feigned by some creative writers approaches being offensive.

Then I finished my schooling, I realized that the time has arrived to map out my path from chaos to career keeping cut throat competition in mind. But declaring myself a creative writing major in college was still a hard choice. I remember my dad calling and asking, his voice full of doubt and frustration, "What are you going to *do* after you graduate? You'll wind up working in fast food." He bombarded me with questions about what my exact plans were, who I wanted to work for, what kinds of positions I could hope to achieve in 20 or 30 years, and criticized me for making what he

considered a purely emotional decision. When my dad gets going, he can really be a bulldozer. I got a lot of pressure from my dad to go into some kind of vocational program, even a “French Diploma.” There were interminable debates and finally I was advised to go for M.A in English Literature because I didn’t give up on my passion for the literature and language. There are many ways of looking at English Literature in India, some of them English and most of them anglicized. This degree provides with a strong grounding in different approaches and practices in English literature, before moving on to focus on contemporary and global literatures, creative writing or a wide range of other options. At that time writing curriculum included both “creative” and “factual” writing genres and I did not conceptualise my work as teaching literacy. I certainly didn’t see this as the easy route, so I was shocked when some of the people who had encouraged my amateur writing efforts balked at my choice.

But worse than my father’s well-intentioned but frustrating pragmatism was the voice coming from within my own head: “I mean, you’re a good writer, but so are lots of other people, and you’re probably not good enough to make it.” I remember one night staying up until dawn in my bottom bunk dorm room bed, reading everything I’d ever written in my life to determine whether any of it was good enough to justify making writing not only my passion, but my life’s pursuit. Things started to improve when I began taking creative nonfiction classes, and I realized that a degree in writing doesn’t mean that I have to be a novelist or a flaky artist. I discovered that I could be a professional, and that I could use my writing to follow my other passions, to accomplish things, to persuade people, to make change. I want to write about the interplay between consciousness about the environment and community. People who can learn to work together as families, buy food from their neighbors and problem solve together create

more sustainable lifestyles than most Indians today, and I can’t keep quiet about it.

When I finished my graduation I was eighteen, all I wanted was to continue writing. My English major had given me an incredible amount of preparation. I wanted to teach English, so everything that I learnt in each of my courses was preparing me to pass on that knowledge. Even if I was not pursuing teaching, my English major would leave me with the capacity to write well and to think creatively and inquisitively, which are abilities that are incredibly important. Employers generally value these skills, as they are relevant and necessary for most jobs. I can’t remember a time when I didn’t write-I’ve always enjoyed it. All I’d like to do is writing--whether it’s a Broadway musical/play, screenplay, novel, poetry or vignette. I just adore writing, and I’ve been told innumerable times that I have talent. Like some people develop an irrational desire to buy a vehicle they can’t afford. They have Car Fever. Other people feel driven to connect with stunningly inappropriate partners. They’ve contracted Relationship Fever. Still others become convinced that their lives will be worthwhile if, and only if, they pursue graduate work in creative writing. Those poor souls suffer from M.F.A. Fever. I have also encountered several different versions of M.F.A. Fever and have been told to find a “real” tenure-track job because writing won’t get me anywhere. But as a young writer I so staunchly believed that soon I’ll be in the list of top writers and admittedly felt incensed if anyone suggested otherwise. I envisioned my passion for writing will one day catapult me into fame and fortune by pumping in nothing but praise, praise, praise.

Ah yes, ye olden MFA debate! It’s no surprises that many applicants are turned away who are good enough to get in. Rejection is painful, and difficult, and that pain cannot be discounted. In the past few years, I have witnessed many of my best and most talented friends suffered this poignant rejection. It’s unbelievable that these

writers, whose voices are original and funny, beautiful and startling, true and sparkling with grit and polish and roar, rejections are hurled at them. Yes, the idea of rejection is scary; the reality of rejection is painful. That pain will make us wonder why on earth we choose to write, why we choose to birth words, then make them public. Make no mistake; we writers will be rejected. Agents will not want to represent our work. Editors will not want to purchase our manuscript. Our sincere blog posts will be mocked. We will get one-star ratings on Amazon and Good Reads. Foolish.... but you know on the other hand, I have wished bon voyage to many supremely talented writers who *were* accepted into MFA programs. It's an educational and sobering read, and it also inspires compassion for these people who must wade through billions of applications every year. Creative writing programs are bombing right now, but it may or may not be the best idea for me.

Ugh, I know that feeling too well myself.

I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man. Here's a fact though: the life of a writer isn't just about producing work; it's about showing that work to others: agents, editors, and most importantly, readers. It's about hearing NO again and again and again, and still turning on the computer, opening the journal, and getting back to work. "MFA in a Box is designed to help us to find the courage to put truth into words and to understand that writing is a life-and-death endeavor-but that nothing about a life-and-death endeavor keeps it from being laugh-out-loud funny. To reaffirm my optimistic expectations I once asked my most trusted friend Matthew if I can plan to earn an M.F.A and continue to write for a living. He retorted saying "How will you support yourself when no one makes a living on writing alone?" Among the hundreds of tips by dozens of writers, not a single one recommends taking a creative writing class. To say that the

position of creative writing in the academy is tenuous is not exactly revolutionary. Unlike literary studies, with its long-established critical pedigree within English departments, and composition studies, which has spent much of the past thirty years mapping out its own theoretical landscape, creative writing pedagogy has been often absent, rarely intellectually rigorous, and occasionally even hostile to its own prospects as an academic discipline. It should then be no surprise that creative writing instructors are a defensive lot when it comes to justifying what we do. Perhaps this is because they know that if you can't work out what good writing is by reading widely, if you need it spelled out slowly with the benefit of a circle of plastic chairs and a whiteboard, you lack the mettle to be a great novelist. There are three difficulties in authorship: to write anything worth publishing-to find honest men to publish it-and to get sensible men to read it.

"Really?" "You mean I'll have to work in a grocery store or something?" The tears flowed to the upturn corners of my mouth bringing them to a middle of my lips. A salty "No" sufficed. Matthew grinned and replied glaring at me over his glass of chardonnay "A grocery store is one possibility you dumbass.?"

This was a self-evident truth and clearly I was somewhat backward for never having thought of it. Every head in the circle nodded in agreement. I was thankful for the guiding hands and reassuring voices in some of those troubled times the wonderful memories always outnumbered the not so pleasant ones so I pocketed all the wonderful experiences I shared over the years, over half my life and pulled them out often for a peek. Uh, oh, I thought, here it comes again: a bit of sport, a spot of rough-and-tumble with a creative-writing teacher. This was a self-evident truth and clearly I was somewhat backward for never having thought of it. Every head in the circle nodded in agreement. Uh, oh, I thought, here it comes again: a bit of sport, a spot of

rough-and-tumble with a creative-writing teacher.

"Aw, man, my parents are gonna be so disappointed," I murmured. "I had told them that I'd get a job writing stories when I finish college." My heart is heavy. I'm tired and joyless. Life looked a journey of no direction, drifting, asleep and tormented. Perhaps we live our lives backwards and experience them forwards. I tell myself that it's no use. I've done my best, done all I can with these circumstances. I am alone, for my despair has chased everyone away. I stand and watch life pulsing along outside my window as if nothing else mattered. With a heart-heavy sigh, I turn away from the window and face the ugly room. Nothing in this room pleases me. I see the contents of this room and believe them a reflection of me. In disgust I look around me, glancing at the things I've accumulated. I am not comforted. I see a huge, dark door at the back of the long, barren room which wasn't there moments before. In amazement, I move closer to see if I'm imagining things. The door looks heavy, made of some kind of rock. Standing inches away, I think I feel slight vibrations coming from this stone passageway. The dark stone door silently calls to me, singing to my heart. Hesitantly, I put my hand upon the surface of the stone. Shockwaves reverberate through my body. Chills run up my spine and the top of my head tingles, hair standing on end.

I hurriedly pull my hand away in fear. I stand back in utter amazement. I can't get my mind around this. I'm curious. What is it? Where did it come from? Why is it here? With this thought, I look around me again. And I see my life of despair, hopelessness, pain and loneliness. Looking back at the door, possibilities of what may be behind it start to form in my mind. What have I got to lose? Do I have enough courage and strength to find out what is behind that door? Curiosity gets the best of me and I go to the door determined to discover its meaning. I see a symbol engraved on

the monolithic rock. I suddenly realize what this door is. It is the DOORWAY of CHANGE.

Change is the only thing that remains constant in this world and throughout the entire universe. When we are resistant to change we feel stagnant and begin experiencing unnecessary pain. Our pain is the result of searching for the unchangeable reality in this ever changeable world. The changes started, with meteors falling from the sky, I stared at the lights raining to Earth, Feeling small, Feeling connected with everything. My soul breathes and pulses within me expanding and contracting like the universe above me. I am not thinking of past sins, burdens or fears, because this moment, I could walk on water, catch the stars before they crash to Earth. I feel the future rushing toward me, I close my eyes and smile, taking a step forward, and so it begins. I irrevocably decided not to go by such advices and continue to read, read, read, and, of course, write on a rigorous daily schedule. Now it's time to set the record straight. It's time to address the myths, topple the misconceptions and fight for the cause. I should attend weekend workshops to get critiques of my work, and visit writing conferences to network with editors and other writers. Of course they should also have some adventures to write about. I'm sick of people talking shit about MFAs, people who love to compare whatever dead author they're drooling over these days-you know someone like Stendhal- to the latest batch of contemporary novelists. Enough about how school poisons genius, about how the workshop makes robots of us all! Enough with the ignorant blanket statements! Some writers with MFAs are great, and some aren't; the same can be said for writers without MFAs.

Writing is the hardest work in the world and I tell you-as if I haven't been told a million times already-that writing is harder, lonelier, nobler and more enriching. Languages have to dance like a familiar chorus swaying around your head in

perfect harmony hand in hand your spirits leaping. And you're flowing internally to the mystic beating of that ethereal orchestra born of diversity. It has to be as perfect and logical as basic chemistry and every element combines with another to create life. Taking this route may get a person closer to publishing copywriting, press release writing, internet marketing, ghostwriting, screen plays, sketches for shows and radio production and comedy routines for professional stand-ups Poetry, or poetic language, can also blow a fresh breeze into what could otherwise turn into a stale academic paper. This is in addition to contributing for various blogs and writing slogans for greeting cards and mobile phone companies. To choose to be a creative writing teacher is to choose a path that is often difficult, but that can be very rewarding. There is significant competition for writing jobs, and it is not a stretch to say that creative writing teaching positions are highly sought after. However, as a creative person, I can find ways to develop my own opportunities. Now I'm thinking I might enjoy being a creative writing professor, because I really enjoy helping people, and that way, I could get time off to devote to my writing, while also having a steady paycheck'

I have been told that a Professor would be a perfect plotline with a neat mix of irony and fateful balance but I still wanted as to how secured is a job of professor? How much moolah does a creative writing professor make vis-a-vs English professor? It was also imperative that I have had enough money for a comfortable life, and good benefits. I'd also like to have a smart bank balance to go jaunting to foreign countries during vacations--that's a big motivation to me.

In order to turn my dreams into reality what should I do about my reading and writing? I associated myself with "Times of India" English daily as a freelancer and contributed a large number of articles. I also continued with my poetry passion and won many national and international competitions. One of my poems

won international award. As a graduate student taking fiction writing workshops many moons ago, I recall what was most motivating to me as a creative writer. I started doing impromptu speaking in college. I. competed in big speech tournaments organised every year by the Times of India across the state of Gujarat... I did it because there was no need for preparation, no homework. Just show up, someone gives me a subject and I rip, start flapping my gums and see what comes out. Surprise them; get them laughing, show some weakness, then some resolve. Allow the audience to identify with me. Then, when the three to five minutes are up, they feel like applauding themselves. This wasn't a popularity contest; it was a very serious business, operating a Nuclear power plant. Whee boom bam, I was being whisked through because, you see, once I was qualified, I would then be standing the watches of those who signed me off. It was to their great benefit to qualify me quickly so that they would then be free to do other exciting nuclear power prototype things you ever hear this one? "Fake it 'till you make it." That's pretty much how it goes. One never knows until one tries. It wasn't the reading of published or award-winning work, and it wasn't the classroom critique given on high from neither the professor nor the scribble from my classmates on my manuscripts. All these things were helpful and valuable, but nothing motivated me more than comparing my fiction to the work of my peers. As I read their work carefully, both objectively and subjectively, I found myself thinking at times that I was sure I could write better than the others around me at the seminar table-then I'd read an artful, poignant story that made me wonder whether I could ever even compete.

Perhaps somewhere between these two attitudes is the most profitable approach when studying the work of my peers. In critiquing the work of others who essentially represent my competition, I should take a respectful stance both critical and kind, just as selection committee members are

likely to do. The notion that decent writing can't actually be taught was something Malcolm Bradbury found himself up against 40 years ago, when he was setting up an MA in creative writing at the University of East Anglia (UEA), the first of its kind. The course is now considered by many to lead the field, and has an impressive alumni list including Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro and Anne Enright. Critics of Creative Writing programs make multiple claims: that these programs isolate writers from real life; that they homogenize writing style; that they turn literature into an academic exercise. Yet as the article's author, Louis Menand, explains, many of the nation's most eminent writers received training in creative writing programs. These include Michael Chabon, Ernest Gaines, Tama Janowitz, Larry McMurtry, N. Scott Momaday, Tillie Olson, and Wallace Stegner. Creative writing is as popular today as critical theory was a decade ago. Why the change and how does it fit in with the study of English literature?

Certainly in most of our academically exclusive schools we find creative writing missing or offered as a grudging gesture. And in these schools as well as in many of our large state universities, creative writers suffer a status something like Japanese prisoners in World War II. These days people are more comfortable with the idea of master-classes whether it's paying for a trainer to help prepare for a marathon or a life coach to help search for a job. Writing is no different. We want to keep on improving in our lives. People who write don't want to stagnate—they look for ways to develop. In the past few years, universities, polytechnics, schools and even kindergartens have seen a massive growth occur in a subject that not too long ago was regarded as a suspect American import, like the hamburger—a vulgar hybrid which, as everyone once knew, no sensible person would ever eat. It is called Creative Writing, and along with other latter day or postmodern activities like Media Studies and Women's Studies, has turned into

one of the subjects of the season. Besides achieving academic recognition, it has spread freely through the broader hinterland. Farmhouse seminars, weekend courses, evening writing workshops, postal courses and handy mercantile handbooks to encourage all of us to develop the obscure quality known as creativity or stimulate the belief that we can all soon be running off with the Booker prize... Creative writers are privileged because they can write declarative sentences because they are less interested in being irrefutably right than they are in the dignity of language itself. Creative writers are as special creatures who possess magical knowledge or are influenced by mystical muses hidden and inaccessible to everyone else. I find words beautiful that ring with psychic truth and sound meant. If such a choice were possible, I would far rather mean what I say than say what I mean. To use language well requires self-sacrifice, even giving up pet ideas.

I love Twitter like all other writers do for the simple reason that we work in solitary confinement—a short distance from the fridge and coffeemaker and often with a dog or cat or two to keep us company while we stare at a screen. Twitter is our water cooler, our cocktail party, our cafe. So when we need a break and want to talk about books and other things literary, many of us turn to Twitter. And with its 140-character limit, Twitter sharpens our word smiting and can even be a source of inspiration. I don't have to be a professor or even a writer to follow these authors. Following them is like being part of a literary salon—thoughtful conversation sprinkled with irony and wit. I may find that I am buying more books as a result. Thanks to my teachers at St. Xavier's college for alerting me to this list of top 50 creative writing teachers on Twitter. The list includes me—much to my surprise in the esteemed company of local authors I love.

I had also always been read to as a child; I was very much taken with the sound of the idea of

voice and storytelling because I had it told to me by my mother who read to us faithfully every night so I just got a love for the language. I spent my undergraduate years at the Gujarat State University, India where I graduated with a degree in English Literature. Or maybe you're wondering if I should have been one or not. Indeed, deciding on a major isn't an easy decision and society only seems to add to the pressure, coaxing you at an early age to decide on "what you want to be when you grow up." I got asked this question for the first time in the fourth grade and I was sure I wanted to be a bus driver. Man, I thought they were awesome. Then I decided I wanted to be teacher. Then a marine biologist. Then a dancer, an actor, and an archeologist. At one point I even wanted to be a chemist, which is scary considering how bad I am with numbers and how short my attention span is. All that plus chemicals equals disaster, possibly of catastrophic proportions. What was I thinking? Well, I was thinking too hard. I went through so many ideas of what I wanted to do with my life that by the time I finally got to college, I didn't trust myself to decide on a major that was right for me. I had a lot of interests and I did well at most of them. But is interest and being "good at something" enough in being happy with your major? No, not at all. When I finally decided on being an English major I fortunately felt at peace with the decision. This was because the relationship between creative writing and English Literature in higher education has been most often defended on the grounds that the formal study of Literature provides very critical viewpoints, important historical information and related relationship with creative writing both logical and positive. For teaching college composition, many colleges, even junior colleges, require an M.A. in English, and consider an MFA insufficient. After all the flip-flopping and hesitation, I finally made the decision based off of not only my interests and my natural abilities, but also based off of what I knew I could see myself doing as a career (which was still a whole lot of stuff) and because of the

flexibility the English major gave me. I prayed that these strengths will help to carry me through the jagged paths that I am yet to travel; I can smell them. A pray is said and a favour asked "please make this jagged road a short one".

Having English major, you have to be opinionated. That can be a good thing and a bad thing of course, but I hated being forced to argue for the sake of arguing. I constantly found myself having to argue why I didn't have an opinion because I could see both sides of the argument (blah, paradoxes.) I also got tired of listening to people talking, talking, talking. My attention can be very short, like I've said, and the constant back and forth by people made me feel like my head was going to explode and I'd just zone out, missing the majority of what was said in class. The lack of opinions and the inattentiveness made me a poor student in the participation department. Sometimes I would have to lie about my opinions (or rather, lack thereof) just to make sure I participated because I didn't want my grade to suffer. Sometimes I'd just come off stupid. I felt robbed of myself sometimes because of all the lying and BSing I had to do just to make the grade. Grading for the English major is also mostly based on the opinions your professor has on your work. English majors take tests but essays and participation are the majority of what you do. Because of this, sometimes I might have to deal with a professor who grades me poorly and says your writing needs a lot of fine tuning, and then have another professor who thinks I'm the shizz and never scores my work with less than a B. Confusing, right? It can also be very frustrating to write in a way that a professor does not like, especially when he gives me lower grades because of it. Great English professors do not grade with bias, but darn if you won't run into professors that do.

The world of letters: does such a thing still exist? Even within the seemingly homogeneous sphere of the university English department, a schism has opened up between literary scholarship and

creative writing: disciplines which differ in their points of reference (Samuel Richardson v. Jhumpa Lahiri), the graduate degrees they award (Doctor of Philosophy v. Master of Fine Arts) and their perceived objects of study ('literature' v. 'fiction'). Mark McGurl's *The Programme Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing*, a study of Planet MFA conducted from Planet PhD, might not strike the casual reader as an interdisciplinary bombshell, but the fact is that literary historians don't write about creative writing, and creative writers don't write literary histories, so any secondary discourse about creative writing has been confined, as McGurl observes, to 'the domain of literary journalism' and 'the question of whether the rise of the writing programme has been good or bad for American writers': that is, to the domain of a third and completely different group of professionals, with its own set of interests, largely in whether things are good or bad. McGurl's proposal to take the rise of the programme 'not as an occasion for praise or lamentation but as an established fact in need of historical interpretation' is thus both welcome and overdue

There has been much buzz in the writing world about the point of pursuing a degree in creative writing. Nay-sayers, of which there are many, claim that the Creative Writing MFA has had an adverse effect on today's literature, particularly in America, where the MFA degree is most popular. The burgeoning trend of the MFA writing program, in that the supply of writers has exceeded demand. Creative Writing, like English, is in a state of transition and some turmoil, though to a lesser extent. Some current dilemmas are whether or not it should be a separate and independent discipline, echoing the split from philology in the last century, and to what extent standardisation should be applied to the field? Sometimes, creativity works against us as English major. English can be very formulaic. If I don't like following formulas, standards, or even decrees, English might not be for me. My creative

writing just simply might be too outlandish for the typical English professor, who loves her rules and standards dearly. I might also have a problem writing what I want to write because of decrees made by a professor. For instance, some professors of creative writing want me to write "literary fiction," not "genre fiction," and therefore do not allow me to write anything that can be considered "genre." This was a major dilemma for me. No one could give me a solid definition of what is "literary" and why "genre fiction" was outlawed. "Literary fiction" got treated like aristocracy when "genre fiction" got treated like a bastard brother. And as an Indian, I fought for my equal rights and said down with the aristocracy. Well, I did in a less colorful and patriotic way. I finally found my opinions and argued about how what is considered literary is ever changing and chose to write what came naturally to me even when it was found to be "genre." This didn't go well with many a professor, however.

Overall, I am glad I decided to be English major. It was definitely a love-hate relationship, but I don't know anyone who loves everything about their major. I love studying pretty much all that the English major is about (I even love studying etymology, British lit, and ancient texts,) but my problem was the majority of people associated with the major. Simply put, it's like the old adage, "I loved my job, hated my boss." You need to see what about English you love, what about it you hate, and which one outweighs the other. Knowing what you want to do with your degree isn't the most important aspect of choosing a major, but it should be noted that English is not in high demand, especially right now with the economy the way it is. English can definitely be the door opener to my future or even a stepping stone for where I want to be, though. For instance, now that I'm a graduate student in English Literature, I've noticed I'm more at ease and more willing to write research papers than most of my peers. I can also see in many

perspectives and communicate these perspectives well, which is a must in this field. My passion for writing and literature is stronger than ever. I learned who I am and wanted to be as writer while I was in college. You can't be everyone's favorite and fit into the cookie-cutter mold. Whatever opinions, good and bad, I received in college made me strive harder to be the best writer of my "genre" that I can be. Whatever that may mean..

It's not surprising to hear historians, a fusty, unhip group slow to adopt high theory, carp about bad writing, but I nearly fell off my own fusty, unhip chair when I read a piece in *The Chronicle* about the supercool journal, *Public Culture*. Eric Klinenberg, the journal's new editor, believes academic prose should not be about showing off your smarts. He says, "I want the writing to be persuasive and argumentative; I want the claims to be backed up by good evidence; and I want the language to be engaging, so that you want to start and finish every article." Woot! Writing frumpy, lumpy prose is the equivalent of showing up on a first date with unwashed hair and dirty clothes, and then talking about yourself in a way that leaves the other person looking at her watch and remembering she has to do laundry. When academic authors set out to seduce the reader, their ideas and research have a chance to make changes in the world.

I always thought I could write reasonably well but I wasn't a top flight writer. Writers were professional, they wrote every day and they took notes everywhere they went to and-well, I wasn't sure what they did. To get better I started taking it seriously and wrote until my fingers bled and read until I could no longer focus. I drank many coffees and sank many pints while discussing books and language, and writing, and words, with people who cared as deeply about those things as I did. I started carrying a notebook everywhere I went and stopped being embarrassed to whip it out and take notes in public. Writing is how I

make sense of my world. It's part of me because finally I am sure what I really wanted to do with my life. I learned who I am, and began the process of learning how I work best. Through it I learned that writing is hard work. Writers write. They don't sit around thinking all day, or lounge about in their pyjamas with a bowl of Coco Pops, watching daytime television while they wait for the muse to descend. Lessons about plot and setting and structure and voice can help, but the only way to become a better writer is by writing. Just me, my pen, my courage, and the whole world of my imagination. It's terrifying, and exhilarating. Gradually I learnt how to make my characters walk and talk, rather than walk then talk. It was magical and provoked my great creative writing epiphanies: that there is no safe path, and in the end we all travel alone.

In a nutshell, I really need to know creative writing skills. They aren't all that hard. They don't even have anything to do with confusing technical jargon. If I pass all tests of MFA there will be a blitzkrieg of congratulations and I would like to become a domesticated writer fondly called a professor. Though I don't have to be a professor or even a writer to follow these authors. Following them is like being part of a literary salon-thoughtful conversation sprinkled with irony and wit. However, it is still exactly what I needed-a huge push to get back into a writing routine. It's a tough career to get into, especially full time. I am not shot with a tranquilizer gun, tagged and shipped off to a university. I have undergone this conversion more or less of my own free will, drawn by the lure of handsome salary and security. Teaching makes me very critical of my own writing. I suppose all writers are that critical, but being the expert critic of your students forces you to codify the criticism in a way that writers who don't teach may not. The same one-liners and pithy pieces of advice I will give to my students, I now give them to myself too. The changes in me are gradual, barely noticeable most of the time,

except when I catch myself using, as I did the other day, words like “pedagogy” and “collegial.” Though I sometimes chafe at my collar, just as often I appreciate the miracle of the job. A typical creative-writing professor has four months of summer vacation; teaches passionate young people a subject they actually want to learn about (and often enjoy); carries a light two-class load per term that is the envy of professors in other departments; and gains both a sense of belonging and ego satisfaction as a pillar—even a star—of a small, intense community of writers and readers. Furthermore, in a time when it is increasingly difficult for literary writers to support themselves through their writing, professorships provide an attractive alternative to working as a bookstore clerk, carpenter’s helper or busboy. The benefits have proved appealing enough to draw thousands of writers into the university fold, and while a couple of generations ago it might have been a surprise to find a writer who taught at a college, now it’s a surprise to find one who doesn’t. It’s fine for writing teachers to talk in self-help jargon about how their lives require “balance” and “shifting gears” between teaching and writing, but below that civil language lurks the uncomfortable fact that the creation of literature requires a degree of monomania, and that it is, at least in part, an irrational enterprise. It’s hard to throw your whole self into something when that self has another job.

When considering the path of a writer, denouncing the worth of this decision may be easy if the deeper benefits are not weighted correctly. It is a challenging path to choose, but is

rewarding as well. In the end writing is a personal choice; the life of a writer is a difficult one, but the personal rewards consist of but are not limited to understanding oneself and the world with greater clarity, finding deeper meaning to events and life in general, and feeling as though the world can be changed in some way, because literature lives on, it survives us, and very few people ever experience the feeling that changing the world is remotely in their grasp. In my opinion, the greatest pleasure in life is putting my pen to paper, and letting the ink run all over, setting free all of my ideas, my dreams, and my fantasies. From those ideas and dreams, I am able to create completely different worlds, different realms filled with unusual characters and entities. Within these unique realms, I can become lost in the excitement that I only I can create. For me, creative writing is my main form of emotional release. It is my way of speaking without ever having to open my mouth. To me, the ability to create a one-of-a-kind universe with merely a ballpoint pen and a blank sheet of paper is the greatest talent one could obtain; a talent that I find to be the most entertaining.

Writing is an exploration of truth in the world and in oneself, as a writer grows so does the writing; it is just as alive as the writer in that sense. I know one day I’ll burn out and nobody will think of me again. Hey, it happens to all of us. At least I know I’ll have served a great purpose. This man and this document are going to change the world and I got to be a part of it. The fires of revolution are being lit and it is all because of me!