

STRATHCONA WRITERS' MUSE

My Name Is Candy by Beth Rowe

I never knew my mom really. When I was only a few days old, I found myself in this big building with many others of my kind. My home was a cage but I was fed and taught to use a litterbox. My litter mates were here as well but in different cages. I don't know what happened to all of them but I think some didn't survive. I was taken to a foster home once the humans thought I was doing okay. Then when I was a couple of months old, I was brought back to the big building. A young human did something to me that hurt for a time and I didn't like it too much. The humans were kind to me even though I got something that stung in my hind quarters every so often. One day some humans came and were looking at all of us in our cages. The lady human looked really nice and took out the cat in the cage below me. I watched this cat jump out of her arms and cause a commotion with the people trying to get her back. I hoped I would be taken out. Sure enough after they caught the other cat, she opened my cage. I decided to be really sweet, so I cuddled up under her chin. She put me back and I thought, *oh no did I do something bad?* I watched sadly as she left, but a few minutes later I saw her come back with a male human. I could hear them discussing me and they took me back out. He seemed friendly, too, and I made sure I behaved. The humans put me back and left and I thought that was it. Quite some time passed and then one of the humans who worked in the big building came and took

me to the lady who had hurt me before. No pain this time though, just looked me over. Then I was put in a box. *What did this mean?* I could hear voices and thought I recognized the humans who had looked at me. A few minutes later the box was lifted into the air and I was moving. The air felt cold but then I was put in a noisy machine where it was warm again. I could hear the voices as we moved. After what seemed forever we came to a stop and I was carried into a new home and let out of the box. After showing me the litter box, the female left and the male held me and being tired I crawled inside his shirt and went to sleep. I woke to the female's voice asking where I was. When I came out she fed me. This looked like it was going to be fine. That night, they began to put out the lights and I wondered where I would sleep. I was lifted onto a large soft bed and between the pillows was a soft bed for me. After some wandering up and down and asking for attention, I settled down on my bed. I woke a couple of times that night but am getting better. My new home has some noisy birds that I would like to catch but I am to learn about them. My favorite place is a tall tower I can climb and play in, watching everything that goes on indoors and outdoors. I'm not allowed outside but it's fun to watch what is going on. With all the attention I get, I think I can manage these humans quite well. I am sure I made a good choice in picking them.

Important Dates

January 1st – Happy New Year to 2016
January 5th – Next Writers Circle at the Library
January 16th - ACCSC Networking
January 16th - Marty Chan Book Swap, Networking
January 26th – Deadline for newsletter submissions

Month of January– Quote

If a mistake is not a stepping stone, it is a mistake.

~ Eli Siegel

EDITOR'S NOTE

Beth Rowe

Here's hoping everyone had a great holiday with lots of cheer, good food, and friends and family to share it with. Remember resolutions are made to be broken. Keep writing and see you in the New Year.



***Upcoming Events:**
ACCSC Networking
Opportunity at
Common Ground
Jan 16 from 7-9pm

Marty Chan
Writer-In-Residence
Book Swap and
Networking
Council Chambers
Jan 16 from 1-3pm

Echoes of Time

By Mike Deregowski

I sit here staring at the midnight sky
Many years later, still wondering why
You came into my life, only to die
Left me suddenly, left here to cry

The cogs still turn
The ashes still burn
within your memory, I do not learn
The echoes of time form another trend
still many years later, I am trying to mend

One? Two? Three? Four?
How many years must I suffer more?
The echoes of time weave a merciless thread
Forever reminding me that you are dead

A care giver

A listener

A protector

An entertainer till the end

The echoes of time took a best friend

As time falls through the hour glass
and earth revolves around the sun

My memories of you will be the only one
The echoes of time, may be merciless indeed
but you will be with me always, wherever I need

It may take another year, or maybe more
but I will see you again, for that I am sure

In a dream

In a smile

In nature's wild

When my sands end and I must leave, too

The echoes of time will let me see you

Under the Gaze of the Full Moon by Mandy Eve-Barnett

“Just typical a full moon shining over the garden, that’s all I need.”

Avril swore under her breath as she sneaked out of her bedroom window. The last thing she needed was to be seen running across the back lawn by her father. He was so controlling with curfews and constant grounding for the slightest misdemeanor – *well, what he thought was misbehavior anyway*. She was fifteen not three! She crept as close to the fence as possible to avoid the silvery light. Good thing she was wearing her black jacket and jeans, less likely to be seen that way and as Colin said she looked sexy in black it was a perfect outfit for tonight.

As she got to the back gate, Avril looked up at her parent’s bedroom window. She squinted at the inky square trying to see if it was truly empty or if her father was standing there observing. The latch squeaked, the noise sounded so loud in the silence surrounding Avril – she cringed and caught her breath. With ears buzzing and an effort to hear footsteps or a door opening, she stood totally still. The silence continued and Avril let out a slow breath of relief.

Sliding through the smallest opening she could manage, at last, Avril was free. The bare trees wouldn’t give her much cover as she ran across the park but if her Dad hadn’t stopped her by now, he was certainly asleep. The silvery moonlight gave the park an eerie look but she wasn’t concerned, Colin would be parked on the far side waiting.

Avril’s heart leapt as she saw his red sports car parked at the curb. Stopping for a moment, she brushed her fingers through her hair and applied lip balm. As she approached the car, she could hear the thump of music.

“Hi, honey.”

“Babe, ‘bout time, the party will have started already.”

“I had to make sure the old grumps were asleep.”

Avril kissed Colin in apology and sat back smiling. As Chris turned the ignition key, bright lights dazzled the two young lovers.

“What the...?”

Two figures emerged in silhouette against the white light. Avril’s heart sank.

“Get out of the car, Avril and you, too, dipshit.”

“Avril, what the hell - how come the police know your name?”

“That’s my Dad, Colin – I’m in so much trouble now.”

“You’re on such thin ice now, Avril, mark my words.”

“Yes, Dad, but I...”

“Enough get in the car...in the back.”

To Avril’s surprise, Colin made a run for the park’s interior and was lost as the two police officers gave chase. She quickly text Colin a message - Don’t run you idiot, we haven’t done anything wrong. It was two hours before she received his reply.

Well not strictly true, there were a couple of stolen game consoles in the trunk and a DVD player. Sorry.

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A Winter Retreat by Mandy Eve-Barnett

The air froze in my nose and my fingers tingled as the cold nipped at them. The ground was a dazzling white after an overnight snowfall. Within winter's grip, life was grey and dreary; something to cheer the heart and warm the bones was in order. With the car heated and warm air blowing full blast, I drove the car towards my favored destination - a place that dispels the winter gloom. I park and open the door, shivering at the sudden cold. With brisk steps, I enter the oasis of plant life and warmth. A garden center is a remedy for winter ills.

Greeted by a staff member bearing a name badge and offering their services, I acknowledge with a smile. Walking slowly to enjoy the scent of flowers and aromatic herbs, my winter despondency gradually lessens. Fingers touch leaves and petals, waxy, smooth, and furry. Colours blaze and renew my senses; winter banished and forgotten within these moments of joy. Lushness and aroma surround me as I relish them. I mentally name familiar plants as I walk the display aisles then spy an unknown, unlabeled variety and my brow creases.

With a quick rummage in my purse, I find my trusty plant dictionary and turn the pages. Noting the leaf shape, the root type, and preferred position, my fingers trace the possibilities. Alas, I do not find this particular plant in the abridged edition, but feel sure my vast collection of plant encyclopedia's at home will herald the answer on my return. With my body warmed and my mind refreshed, I leave the garden center and hurry home with a mission to find that particular plant giving me a renewed enthusiasm.

Quote:

“Start writing, no matter what. The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on.”

– Louis L'Amour

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Writers Foundation of Strathcona County

2015 – 2016 Board Members and contact information:

Joe McKnight	President	jmcknight2@hotmail.com	
Bethany Horne	Vice President	cbhorne@shaw.ca	
Linda Pedley	Treasurer	wildhorse33@hotmail.com	780-445-0991
	Web Site Administration		
Mandy Barnett	Secretary	mandybar@shaw.ca	
Karen Probert	Past President		
	Library Liaison	karen@lumevision.com	780-464-6632
Beth Rowe	Director /Newsletter	bethrowe1@telus.net	780-718-7253
	Your Lifetime of Stories Coordinator		

Henry Martell

Director

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Director

We want to extend our thanks to Cate Helgeson for her work as director on the Board – good luck with your new job. Keep on writing and we hope to see you at upcoming meetings! ~ The Board

www.wfscsherwoodpark.com

Email: wfscsherwoodpark@hotmail.com Phone: 780-953-WFSC