

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

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

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

**Original Works by Members of the Pen & Ink Writers' Group
© 2019 Pen & Ink Writers' Group**

November 2019 selection – Invisible

**Invisible
By Pauline Bastek**

I must be invisible I've been sitting here for a half hour at least and have been successfully bypassed by every waitress. Yes, and you could use that to your advantage. I turned around to where the voice seemed to be coming from to see a woman about my age, dressed in a dark hooded rain coat and slacks with typical black walking shoes, smiling at me. I'm sorry I said, I was just talking to my myself since I can't seem to get anyone's attention. I didn't notice you sitting there.

No, of course not. I'm invisible, too. Over 65, comfortable shoes and coat, short hair, we could pass for one another, in fact. I have, she said. More than once in fact, that's what brings me here. A funeral for a friend, or rather her husband. He took a nasty spill down the stairs and was dead when she came home to find him the next day. She was questioned but showed her boarding pass to Seattle at about the time he died.

Of course, she was home and I had been to Seattle, but then, one old lady looks like another. Oh, sorry, they just called priority boarding for my flight back to Seattle. I helped her with the final arrangements and will be meeting her in a few months to tour the gardens in Victoria British

Columbia. She always wanted to see them but her husband deemed it a waste of money, but now it's her money and to show her appreciation she invited me to join her. Oh sorry, must go it was so nice to chat with you.

She was gone before I could get a word out. There you go, Ma'am, iced tea and chicken salad on whole wheat. Will there be anything else? I stared at the waitress, standing before me who had suddenly not only materialized but bearing food that I had not ordered. I didn't order this. It must have been the other lady who just left.

She glared at me saying in tones frosty enough to chill my drink that I most certainly had. There was no one else sitting there and if I changed my mind about my order to please say so, but she really didn't appreciate me trying to make a fool of her. Maybe I forgot and if so, she can understand. It come with age they say but before she could say more, I apologized saying I had just come from a funeral and was a bit confused. That's right, you told me that you hadn't had time to stay for the luncheon and were quite hungry when you ordered which is why I rushed your order. I thanked her with a \$20.00 bill. And said I was sorry but I had to leave and to enjoy my lunch.

Before I could change my mind, I texted my friend, Deb, telling her to check out the prices for the Grand Circle tour of Florence and Rome, I would explain when I saw her.

Frank was picking me up or would he be picking her up. After all. One old lady looks like another. We are really invisible.

###

Invisible Sometimes
By Carol Karvon

Sometimes Jane felt invisible.

It started when she was a girl. Her siblings used to tease her and pretend she didn't exist. She was the youngest of five children and her mom often thought of her as "the baby". She tried very hard to dispel that notion, but somehow it stuck through most of her life.

Jane couldn't start school until she was nearly six years old because her birthday was near Christmas and the cutoff date was in September. Mom used to tell everyone what a joy it was to have her "little girl" home with her for an extra year.

Unencumbered by dragging all five children around with her, mom could concentrate on just being with Jane. They could go to the mall. They could go to the Old Tyme Ice Cream Shoppe, a particular favorite spot of Jane's, and eat hot fudge sundaes, a particular favorite of moms. They

could visit friends and relatives alike, at least until it was time for the others to return home from school.

When they came home the atmosphere at home changed drastically — everyone was vying for mom's attention. They each longed to tell her what had happened in school that day. Since Jane had mom all to herself all day long, no one felt guilty about pushing her aside to get next to mom.

Mom never saw, or at least never let on, what was going on. As far as she was concerned her children had no faults, or if they did, those faults were invisible to her eyes. Ah, but dad was a different story. When he walked in the door at night and they all pounced on him at the front door, he knew not to pay too much attention to their antics. He knew each child wanted to be recognized as the favorite child. He would not fall into that trap. He had no favorite, at least not that he'd ever admit it.

He'd usually say, "Ok, let me get changed for dinner and then we can discuss the day together, before we sit down to eat. Don't worry, you'll each get a chance to talk." He wasn't fooled by the clamoring of each child to be the first to tell him his or her version of the day's events. All except Jane would be waiting, not too patiently, by the staircase for dad to return. They lined up with much jostling around to be first to see dad come down. If you listened carefully, you could almost hear each child saying, "me, me, me first, dad".

Dad didn't think for one minute that they loved him so much they couldn't bear to wait another minute to talk to him. Oh, they loved him well enough, but he knew his children were very competitive in nature and mostly tolerated it. He knew this trait would probably benefit them later in life, but sometimes it was difficult to deal with at home.

Sometimes, he wished he could be invisible for a day or two and just observe them when they weren't aware and on guard. It might be most illuminating.

###

The Invisible Rascalion **By N. Stewart**

Pretend sitting on an ocean liner deck chair, watching all the people around me, and while wearing my Harry Potter cloak, I was invisible to all of them. I could see them. No one could see me and I could move around wherever I wanted. No one ever noticed.

I jumped up from the chair and approached the first people I saw. A couple sat there all gooe-eyed, looking at each other, holding hands. Just to see what would happen, I stood as close as I could to the guy. No reaction. Then I breathed down his shirt collar. He reacted by jerking his shoulder up like he was shooing a fly or a bug off his neck. I blew down several more times until

he began swatting many times at his neck and almost hit me in the nose. I laughed. He heard the sound and looked around, but couldn't see me because I was...invisible in my cloak.

This is fun I thought, so I hunted for another person. There, not too far away, sitting on another deck chair was an old lady who had fallen asleep with an open book in her lap. I walked right up to her and pulled out the paper bookmark. She didn't move. I put my fingers under the book cover and slammed it shut, knocking it off her lap. I let go of the bookmark, it floated down on top of the book. She moved this time. Waking with a start that almost sent her flying off the chair, she said a string of bad words. But she never saw that it was me that knocked her book off her lap even though I was standing right next to her. That's because I am...invisible.

There's nothing more to do here. So, I moved on to two kids, playing War, a boy and a girl, maybe a brother and sister. Each drew a card from the pile, sitting on the table. Together at the same time they slapped it face up. "That's mine," yelled the boy and picked up both cards. His pile was really big and she was almost out of cards. She reminded me of my little sister so I took a small stack of cards from the bottom of his deck and slid them under her pile of cards. Neither noticed. They drew again and again and he won again and again. Her pile got bigger and bigger, thanks to me, even though she lost hand after hand. His pile got smaller, thanks again to me. I watched him as his eyes got bigger and bigger at the pile getting smaller and smaller as I took even more cards from his pile and added them to hers.

"You're stealing my cards. You, you card thief. Stop it," he said.

"I'm not a thief. I didn't steal anything. I never touched your stupid cards," she said.

"Yes, you did. You've been taking my cards and adding them to your pile. I'm certainly not doing it," he countered. The yelling and the accusing continued as I moved cards and evened up the piles. Both couldn't believe what they saw as the cards magically moved from one pile to another. I snorted because I knew. It was invisible me with my cloak of wonder that had moved the cards.

I was deciding what to do next when I was summoned back by a familiar voice. "Timmy, time to come in and wash up for dinner," Mother said. "It's getting dark and...no use trying to hide under the cloak, young man, I see you sitting on the deck chair. Come in now."

How does she do that? I'm invisible to the world and everyone in it. Rats, my cloak has failed me on account of her. She must have special powers that she can see me when I'm cloak-covered and invisible to everyone else.

"Comin' Mom," I said, taking off and carefully folding up my Harry Potter cloak as I became totally visible to all in the world.

###

Frogs and Toads of the Chicago Region
By J. Smetana

I was at Nookies trading barbed witticisms with Joyce Saxon when my 'phone rang. Hola I exclaimed with alacrity. Hey man, did you know Kirsten Dunst has an INVISIBLE boyfriend? No, Jerry I answered I did not know that. Yeah man it makes sense now when you think about it. She never gets into any scandals at least not that we know of and sometimes when you see her talking to herself she's really talking to the bf I thought she had the Tourette's and when she's bouncing up and down in her seat out of control, like, and moaning it's just the two of 'em...well you know. Yeah Jerry I think I understand, thank for calling.