

All Adult Entries

Bad Taste

I've had these attacks of anger lately and wonder if there's a bug going around. At the grocery store I found myself spontaneously arguing about my place in line with a frazzled mother carrying a tiny baby. When she called me on it in a muttering sort of way I had the good health to back off but we both had a bad taste in our mouths.

Joanna Dunbar

Before Dinner

after a long morning's knitting the day is punctuated by hunger. Oatmeal oranges sunflower seeds in the shell nothing will suffice. I go to buy food stopping at the recycling depot to unload stinky milk cartons. When it is my turn the server drifts away occupied with other tasks. I yell and a man comes back, gives me instructions then coins. Groceries are bought, tiny snacks eaten and the windows steam with cooking.

Sheena Black

Divine Intervention

All that frozen, black night of gunfire and mortar shock, I lay twisted under my brother, his weight a small comfort I could no longer feel. His guttural moaning had been as rhythmic as waves. Hours of torture and pain, slimed with blood and brain. I prayed for it to stop. And it did. A scream of my own gathered like a storm and then his eyes, clear and bright with love, gazed into mine. "Shoot me", he said.

Annabelle Tully-Barr

Ghostly

A man was sitting in a railway compartment and reading a ghost story. Suddenly, he laughed derisively and flung the book aside.

Glancing at the stranger opposite he said: "Do you believe in ghosts?"

"Yes," said the stranger, and vanished.

Shirley Gendron

Gunter

When he was 10 years old Gunter's father, Hans, had given him a Young Boy's Chemistry set. That had set him on a path towards greatness, as an academic, a scientist and a chemist. The gift had led him to his first Nobel Prize and Gunter was forever grateful to his Dad. But because of that chemistry set, after more than 5 decades, he still blamed Hans, his father, for the fact that he had no eyebrows.

Deb Calderon

Hair Today

James had liked the steaming radiators, the pile of Newsweeks and his monthly chat. Lloyd had been his barber for more than 50 years. They had talked sports, family and politics while James' hair thinned and his face wrinkled. Now the barbershop had become a bright, new café; all baristas and lattes.

James shrugged and walked away and knew that no fresh coffee aroma could ever replace the tangy scent of Aqua Velva.

Deb Calderon

Holy Orders

I wanted to be a nun when I was young, but I became a stewardess instead. I thought that the flying would be more fun than the praying. I imagined that travelling the world to such exotic places as Bangkok, Munich and Tokyo would beat the pants off cleaning the alter rail. And I believed that meeting rich and powerful men who flew the skies would be much nicer than hanging out with the poor. Turns out I was wrong.

Deb Calderon

Legacy

A plaque proclaims him a founder of an ancient church in Holland over 400 years ago. He was jailed, escaped death by Catholic inquisition, wrote voraciously under an assumed name, worked ceaselessly with his brother and others to create the Dutch Reform Church. Now I stand in the pulpit as a lay minister with freedom to preach without fear, a legacy from this grandfather. Would I have his courage of faith?

Lynn McCann

Life as Usual

The girl lay in her bed awake late, waiting. A car drove up. She held her breath. The back door slammed. She heard her mother whine *where have you been?* Her father spat back *bitch, don't question me* followed by the sound of a slap and a body hitting a wall. Her mother's wails were counterpoint to her father's staggers up the stairs. With one deep breathe the girl let go and fell asleep. Her father was home, as usual.

Marg McNeil

Lunch at the Sunnyside Care Home

Gray head bowed Meg prayed, "Lord remember, 70 years ago I got that dolly I wished for from the Christmas catalogue. When You sent me my John I ignored him. Thank You for being more stubborn than I and for giving us so many years. With life's hard stuff You were there easing my pain. Today all I asked for was something gooey and chocolatey. THANK YOU LORD.

Meg picked up her fork and dug into her lemon meringue pie.

Marg McNeil

Not Texada

At night our room becomes tropical. Sheets and shirts become damp and we long for nudity and the cool bite of winter as we go about the business of dreaming. It is never quite dark here in the city and it is hard to lose awareness of everything and to sink deeply into the world of sleep, but we try on our place on the floor in the dusk.

Sheena Black

Post Card to Mars 1

I just carved a pumpkin for Halloween today.
I watched the video 'Blues Brothers' last night
and thought that would be a good way to dress
for the public meeting by Island Timberlands in the
ball room of the Town Centre Hotel.
Thought I'd invite some of my friends;
The police were there at the door and the media,
city councilors and protesters against logging
for the biggest hippie celebration of the year.

Daniel Rajala

Post Card to Mars 2

I got a job and today I planted
one hundred daffodils in a garden bed.
My boss has nick named me 'killer' already

when he invited me in for a cup of coffee.
He asked me when Halloween was and
I said, 'It has already started this week.'
It was cupid with his finely chiseled
youthful body, running into the flower
section of the supermarket, past the Halloween
display, shooting his arrows of love in the air.

Daniel Rajala

Repair

Myrtle stopped the steaming Buick two days West of Chicago. She heaved open the hood. The radiator hose was shredded. They would have to camp roadside. They had done it many times before on this trip to the coast. Adeline and the children were her responsibility. She had the 32 under the seat. But what could she possibly use for repair? And then she remembered the smoked side of bacon, rind thick and tough.

Annabelle Tully-Barr

Set Dec

woken from a cozy sleep by the phone. A summons to work at the colourful docks. a fashionable bearded man wearing gumboots had us move objects into a trailer to build a Russian gangsters lair. I cleaned black plastic boxes and chairs with a spray that made me thirsty. A cracked window was scraped of blue tape. I asked for my next task and was told to go home. The sun was setting and happy I walked out in the glow.

The Children's Answer Machine

The principal came into the grade one room, "Ms. Smith, I like visiting your class. They're so inspired to learn. How do you do it?"

Ms. Smith merely smiled.

"What's this?" he pointed to the old-fashioned dial phone sitting on her desk.

"It's the children's. It gives them an answer to anything they *wish* to know."

He reached towards it, "How does it work?"

Voice firm Ms. Smith spoke, "Please don't. It's the children's."

Marg McNeil

The Dress

We sorted the house after his mother's death. Many boxes; most were to be discarded. A picture and letter were found. A young couple, out for an evening in Shanghai; she beautiful in a black silk dress, he handsome and proud. We paused to relish their moment. Hours later I found the dress, saved all those years. Could it be worn again? I saw the holes caused by moths and mildew. Onto the trash heap it went.

Anne Carney

The Line Continues...

As a child, my mother was enough to drive a saint to drink. Oh, the stories! I told my daughter "if you have a child just half as bad as you, you'll have twins!" Her Shelbie proved to have the stamina and inventiveness of twins for mischief. Shelbie is now expecting her first child. I will not lay on her the mother's curse but instead wish for her a child perfect in every way, just like me!

Lynn McCann

Three Bandits

Three bandits run from me and with them go three ideas of me. The first bandit jumped from a cliff. My idea fell away with him. The second I caught a year later. She confessed to know nothing and I believed her. Each day we mourned the loss of the first and grew fonder in our search for the third. Up mountains and down rivers we chased, tumbled boulders and shouted his name. The third bandit remains free to this day.

Cameron Taranoff