

WRITER'S HELPER

“Depressed me? No way! I’m going out laughing. You know why? ‘Cause this case has been nothing but a joke from the start.”

I stared down at the words I’d just written, frowned, and yanked the offending paper out of the battered Remington and tossed it across the room. “ Now there’s a ‘dead head’ beginning if I ever saw one.”

As I watched it sail over and fall among the rest of the morning’s ‘goodies’, I shook my head in disgust. “There’s half a days effort gone up in smoke.

"Anyway, how about I introduce myself? Name's Finnigan Behhan and just to keep the record straight, I consider myself a writer. Mind ja,' I said writer, not author. I've always considered an author as a guy that sits at a word processor, mapping strategy for his next novel and probably doing it form some high rise overlooking Central Park.

“Me? I have a 20 year old machine who's claim to fame is that the M only sticks occasionally. And my digs (love that term, picked it up from an English movie I saw in the village) are in the mid 80's. You know, the section of the city they call, "T.D.E. stands for "too damn expensive."

I really can't afford it, but when my ex moved out, I figured it would be simpler to just stay and sweat out the rent, rather than settle in some dump. “The role of a starving artist’s not for me!” Face it, with my present income it would have to be some dump over on the Westside,

You can take it to the bank that my friend the author, has an agent with offices on

Madison Ave. and they probably transact their business in some posh restaurant over Lobster Bisque and very Dry Martini's.

Me? My agent, Benny Forelli's about as successful getting me published as he is at Yonkers Raceway's \$2.00 window. And when we do get together, it's usually at Chock-Fuller-Nuts!

But I guess both my friend the author and I, should consider ourselves pretty lucky. We don't punch any time clocks or face any traffic jams and the only stress we face is an occasional deadline.

“I should be so lucky!”

However, in spite of all the blathering, it hasn't been that bad a year. I still made enough to hang on to the BMW, didn't have to duck the landlord too often and my Ex got her checks on time (well mostly, that is). But I have to keep in mind that; car payments, landlords and ex wife's are always just around the corner. So I'd damn well better work my way out of this dry spell and quick.

Though I'm sure you've been hanging on my every word, how about I shake you up a bit? Maybe this will do it.

“It just seemed to rise up out of nowhere, take a couple of turns around the room and then flop back down next to the Remington.”...

Interested? Thought ya' might be!

It all started (as we writers like to say) during an evening stroll along the East River. I'd just finished a great meal, courtesy for a local watering hole that owed me and I felt a bit of exercise would be in order.

This particular area has been good to me. A number of my most saleable ideas have been

hatched right along this very same path. Anyway, I was just strolling along, when I happened to glance down into the water and by the reflection from that 40 watt bulb (laughingly called a security light) I saw something move!.

At first I figured it was maybe a crab or baby Alligator, (don't laugh, you'd be surprised what your average New Yorker dumps down his toilet bowl.) When I looked closer, I could see it was trying to grab onto a piece of cardboard stuck against the wall.

I guess I've always had a soft spot in my heart for losers, having been there more than once myself. So you shouldn't be too surprised when I tell you what I did next.

Yep, I actually climbed over the railing, reached down and made a grab for it

As I wiggled my finger around in the water, I swear it moved toward me, made half a turn and jumped up into the palm of my hand. I don't know what I had expected, but I was sure disappointed, 'because when I looked closer all I could see was something that resembled a dirty piece of yellow sponge. I was about to toss it away, but for some reason didn't. Instead, squeezed it out, and stuck it in the pocket of my sportcoat.

More than once on the way back to my place, I was tempted to throw it one of those cans you can find all around the city. You know the ones, that say, "Please keep our city clean." Lots of luck, with that one, Mr. Mayor!

Mumbling to myself, about what a jerk I was being and inspite of the fact that it was now dripping onto my new Daks, i left it there.

However, when I got home, took it out and dropped it on my sink top, I knew I'd been right, It was only a piece of wet sponge, so I gave it a shove and let it drop into the garbage.

Now I usually make it a habit of trying to get in 3 or 4 pages of my present masterpiece, before breakfast. So by the time I did start the coffee, last nights incident was all but forgotten.

And it wasn't until I sank the remains of another delicious meal into the pail, that I realized it was gone.

The only thing to show that it had even been here was a damp green spot on the sink top. Funny, when I tried to wipe it off with the sleeve of my bathrobe (we divorced guys aren't too neat) it wouldn't budge. Infact, the more I rubbed, the brighter it became.

I glanced around the room as if expecting to find it, sitting on the window sill or maybe leaning up against the mirror on my bureau.

But it was no where to be seen!

It had been at least a week since all that had happened and I'd just about given up on ever seeing it again. When all of a sudden, there it was!

It seemed to come out of nowhere take a couple of turns around the room, buzz my desk, then make a perfect three point landing on the typewriter. Then roll up against the gizmo that holds the paper and simply lie there.

"Gee, I thought, maybe I can get it to fix the M."

When I walked over and pushed at it with my finger, somehow it looked different. I wana' say smoother. No, gentler would be a better word.

You won't believe what I did next. Yep, I actually starting talking to it. What's that song that goes, "you should see me now etc, etc"? I'm damn glad they can't.

'Cause, I can just hear that bunch down at Clancy's, "what about good old Finnigan? Did ya' know he's talkin' to the Blob?

But never the less, that's what I did and it turned out just fine.

I won't bore you with anymore details, but would you just look around at where we are? Where? Only one of the most prestigious supper clubs in the entire city.

And who do you think's sponsoring this affair? Would you believe the national Guild of Writers. Know who's the guest of honor? Me, that's who! But let's be quiet, my friend the author's about to speak.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I have the great privilege of introducing tonight's guest of honor. Mr. Finnigan Benehan. They tell me, he prefers to be called just plain Finny.

"This is a person who has taken our industry by storm. Not only has he produced 3 best sellers, but he's done it all in the past year. How's that for an accomplishment.

"So without further ado; Finny will you come up here and let our members get a look at you?" i walked up and stood before the podium as if I'd been born to it.

However, looking across the smiling faces and clapping hands I couldn't help but thin, the person that should be up here is now residing back at my apartment.

Because the real recipient of this award should go to a small piece of sponge that's probably right now resting contentedly on the back of my Remington!

And oh yeah, guess what? The M no longer sticks!