

The Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest



The Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest

Where “WWW” means “Wretched Writers Welcome”

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2002 Contest Winners

Winner



-  On reflection, Angela perceived that her relationship with Tom had always been rocky, not quite a roller-coaster ride but more like when the toilet-paper roll gets a little squashed so it hangs crooked and every time you pull some off you can hear the rest going bumpity-bumpity in its holder until you go nuts and push it back into shape, a degree of annoyance that Angela had now almost attained. — Rephah Berg, Oakland, CA

Proving once again that Tom Hanks is not the only illustrious person from Oakland, California, the winner of San Jose State University’s 21st annual Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest is Oakland resident Rephah Berg. With 25 years of editing experience, she also occupies herself by producing puzzles for newsstand magazines and what she calls “bursts of wit” for lapel buttons. In her spare time she also tends to plants and animals and does volunteer work with an agency for the visually impaired. Her first name is pronounced REE-fa and her last name rhymes with the final syllable of “iceberg” (which is conveniently spelled the same). In the musty world of the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, also known as the Bad Writing or Dark and Stormy Night Contest, Ms. Berg qualifies as a recidivist or repeat offender, meaning that she has entered before. [Last year she won the Detective Category.](#)

Runner-Up:

- The professor looked down at his new young lover, who rested fitfully, lashed as she was with duct tape to the side of his stolen hovercraft, her head lolling gently in the breeze, and as they soared over the buildings

of downtown St. Paul to his secret lair he mused that she was much like a sweet ripe juicy peach, except for her not being a fuzzy three-inch sphere produced by a tree with pink blossoms and that she had internal organs and could talk. — Charles Howland, St. Paul, MN

Winner: Detective



- Chief Inspector Blancharde knew that this murder would be easy to solve – despite the fact that the clever killer had apparently dismembered his victim, run the corpse through a chipper-shredder with some Columbian beans to throw off the police dogs, and had run the mix through the industrial-sized coffee maker in the diner owned by Joseph Tilby (the apparent murder victim) – if only he could figure out who would want a hot cup of Joe. — Matthew Chambers, Hambleton, WV

Runner-Up

- Detective Driscoll had fallen off the wagon like a frozen turkey from a Goodwill helicopter and, like a talking elephant reunited with his old circus buddies after 50 years, he reminisced about the most memorable collars of his career – and he guffawed so hard that he fell off the barstool like another turkey from another helicopter as he recollected the time he arrested a mime for shoplifting and had to say “You have a right to remain silent ...” — Vince Lucid, Pennellville, NY

Dishonorable Mentions:

- The jangling phone disturbed the fly, the blue bottle fly, the blue bottle fly performing precise, low-swooping wingovers above my four-sugar coffee while the potted palm made a feeble attempt at photosynthesis with the naked 25 watt bulb that hung from the cracked plaster of my low-rent office on a less-than-desirable (unless you were vermin) stretch of Pico. — John Knoerle, Chicago, IL
- It was a warm, rank odor that hit Detective Swatworth’s nostrils, breaking into components that seemed hauntingly familiar, reminiscent of dangerous deeds past, lighting up every wary fiber in his torso, warning him to be wary of what lay ahead, on guard, finger on the trigger, then relaxed again as he realized it was coming from his own armpit. — Duke Smith, Warren, OR

Winner: Purple Prose



- The blood dripped from his nose like hot grease from a roasting bratwurst pierced with a fork except that grease isn’t red and the blood wasn’t that hot and it wasn’t a fork that poked him in the nose but there was a faint aroma of nutmeg in the air and it is of noses we speak not to mention that if you looked at it in the right profile, his nose did sort of look like a sausage. — Jim Sheppeck, Farmington, NM

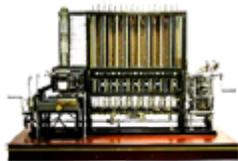
Runner-Up:

- Henrietta slept like a log; not your garden variety log, mind you, but one of those phenomenally enormous old-growth South American rain forest logs that is completely enshrouded with luxurious plush green moss and encircling vines with those unworldly twisted rope-like root structures wrenched from the earth and sitting there on its side in the mud and when you try to wake it up just lies there like the enormous moss-covered, vine-enshrouded log in the mud that it is. — Martin F. Melhus, Evanston, IL

Dishonorable Mentions:

- Sheila was easy as opening a jar of pickles, not one closed by a man who has virility doubts and closes a jar so women and young boys get hernias opening it or at least the boys get them; although I heard about a woman who had a hiatal hernia so I guess women get them too but doctors don't ask them to cough unless their malpractice covers sexual deviance but a jar closed by some ninety-year-old whose grip on the jar as well as reality has slipped. — Warren T. Smith, Redmond, WA
- The cracked, cement-colored, wooden steps to the cellar of the old haunted mansion lead down to the basement, which also had a creepy cement color on the walls, although they were constructed from drywall. — Cindy Shirak, Redford, MI
- He slumped in his chair like a sack of flour slung over the shoulder of an aging warehouse man who had seen too many midnight shifts in a town where second chances were left only to the savvy souls who knew enough to skip out of this forgotten bastion of warehouses, rotting fish carcasses, and a third-tier law school. — Leslie A. Pardo, Lakewood, OH
- As her tears blurred his receding figure into a ghostly memory, she realized how thoroughly he had broken her heart, like a steamroller grinding the shards of a perfume bottle into splintered, dusty oblivion, at least as much as one can "break" a squishy organ composed of 70% water by weight; heck, let's be honest, you can no more break a heart than you can perform an appendectomy with a spoon, which is perhaps a better analogy for her pain in the first place. — Phil Currier, Cambridge, MA
- The tropical island rose abruptly from the jade-green sea like some ancient leviathan skimming the surface for krill and imperceptibly deflected the warm, spice-tinged trade winds that had once propelled Drake, Cook, and Chichester on their momentous voyages, but which made no difference whatsoever to Forbes MacVane as he stood shivering in the "Windy City," waiting for his contact to alight from the EL. — Patrick Bomgardner, APO AE 09469

Winner: Science Fiction



- It was a dark and silent night in Pluto, a planet nobody had ever taken seriously because of its name, which reminded us of the funny cartoon dog, and it being so far from the sun and having no atmosphere, which seemed unimportant as it was, obviously, lifeless – we thought – in those happy and carefree days when all the world had to worry about was war, famine, pestilence, and death. — Anna Rotenberg, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Runner-Up:

- The controls looked normal – the beeping thing was beeping, the humming thing was humming, the blue number display was displaying blue numbers, the yellow number display was displaying yellow numbers, everything seemed OK, but the redundancy of this interplanetary trip left Col. Mountain feeling troubled, troubled like a beeping thing not beeping, or a humming thing not humming, or a blue number display not

displaying blue numbers, or a yellow number display not displaying yellow numbers; nothing felt right. — Kevin Kriss, Cedar Park, TX

Dishonorable Mention:

- It had started off as a prank, but when Major Elyse Livesay discovered (during her solo space walk, no less!) the tarantula that the boys in the crew had slipped into her spacesuit, she knew that while in space no one could hear you scream, it was damn sure not for lack of trying. — Matthew Chambers, Hambleton, WV

Winner: Western



- Doc Parker looked down as Sheriff Eddie LaDuke lay desperately gasping his final breaths in the dusty sun-baked Arizona desert, knowing there was little he could do as the outlaw's bullet had shredded Eddie's internal organs like fresh coleslaw, leaving Doc to ponder his next move equipped only with his pistol, some chewing tobacco, and now, one extra horse. — Mike Madill, Toronto, Ontario

Winner: Spy Fiction



- It was a long and boring flight to Moscow's Sheremetevo Airport and when Special Agent Jasper Smoot debarked and walked into the restroom marked "Dama" in Cyrillic he might have found the woman there attractive except she had more whiskers than a Civil War general and was pointing a crossbow at his head. — Michael McNierney, Greeley, CO

Winner: Romance



- Hermann lay with Esmerelda, entwined with one another among love-tangled sheets and he thought how this one constant yet mercurial woman was one whom he could hold in his arms forever, although eventually he'd have to get up to go to the bathroom. — Vance Atkins, Seattle, WA

Runner-Up:

- Ralph awoke groggily, and after searching through the overflowing ashtray on the nightstand for a half-smoked cigarette, looked over at the rumped form of Lila sleeping next to him in bed and wondered idly why making love with her made him feel as though his body had been pounded by heavy surf. — Mary Britton, Berrien Springs, MI

Dishonorable Mention:

- As she lay in the embrace of her lover's arms following their ardent lovemaking, Sharon quietly hoped the moment could last forever, well, not really forever, since she had a pedicure in two hours, followed by lunch with her former college roommates, but at least for a long while or so. — Tom O'Leary, Covina, CA

Winner: Vile Puns



- It wasn't a dark and stormy night when the Russian space station burned up in its final descent through the atmosphere, so it cast a glow on the face of a young Fiji girl sitting on the beach, causing her boy friend sitting next to her to utter, "Bei MIR bist du schoen." — Jerome Radding, M.D., Laguna Woods, CA

Runner-Up

- The giant ape's broken body lay upon the asphalt and I didn't know which had finally done him in – the planes' machine guns, the fall from atop the building, or maybe just a broken heart – but it was all so heart-wrenching, so tragic, his climbing the Empire State Building just to get a glimpse of that woman's gorgeous derriere, and the sheer waste of it all finally prompted me to pronounce my own benediction over his great, furry carcass: "'Twas booty killed the beast!" — Justin Gustainis, Plattsburgh, NY

Dishonorable Mentions:

- The Sultan, having dutifully consulted with his palace sages, historians, and theologians, was finally convinced that nothing in the lore of his religion could guide him in the selection of a Network Operating System, and the conclusion was now clear to him, that though most computers in the Palace Administration should run under WINDOWS, yet the Harem Management must be served by UNIX. — Harry W. Hickey, Arlington, VA
- What though the steed that carried the young knight over the streets of old Prague was foaled in far Araby, what though the sword at his side came from distant Spain, what though his armor had been formed on German anvil, yet the patriot heart of the warrior was all that mattered; in that mail there was a Czech! — Harry W. Hickey, Arlington, VA
- This is a story of twin Siamese kittens, or, more specifically, of their shared appendage; it is a tail of two kitties. — David Bubenik, Palo Alto, CA
- Dispatched to the steamy tropics by crusty editor, Warren Pease, to interview renowned spiritualist, Serrafima Raire, in her grass shack, which he truly feared would exacerbate his chronic asthma, London Times ace reporter John Donne found her dying of jungle fever, forcing him to write despairingly in his cable to the home office, "Medium Raire not well – Donne." — Allan W. Eckert, Bellefontaine, OH

Winner: Adventure



- The sun beat like a molten hammer upon the sand that Jasper trudged upon, scorching his bare skin, baking his eyeballs dry, boiling his brains in his skull, and bleaching his hair to that lovely yellowy shade that perfectly matched his taupe shirt, the one that he could wear with either his suede jacket or the denim one. — Geoff Blackwell, Bundaberg, QLD, Australia

Runner-Up:

- Ungaloo, although he found the new washer and dryer fair dinkum for washing his cutoffs, could only wonder at the occasional loss of a single stocking, something he attributed to his Aboriginal ancestors, thoughtfully considering the footwear as going sockabout. — Vance Atkins, Seattle, WA

Dishonorable Mentions:

- The late afternoon sun cast long shadows across the veldt, but the hot air still shimmered above the ground, heavy with the pungent melange of dust and acacia and animal musk – no relief for Weatherby, crouching in silence for hours in the shelter of the giant thornbush, clinging to hope and recalling the baleful warning of the old Masai: “Don’t drink the water.” — Steve Miller, San Diego, CA
- I traveled long and hard to get here, blindfolded by suspicious gunmen, riding donkey-back for hours across inhospitable terrain, with no idea of whether the next valley would contain an ambush or a bomb, cut off from communication and denied the basic amenities of civilization, but finally I was able to meet with the terrorist leader and see the Polaroids of how silly I had looked riding blindfolded on a donkey. — Nina Schroeder, Damascus, MD
- Boris, the flying monkey, shot a glance backwards and although it missed he did glean that the enemy F-18 was hot on his tail and the serpentine limb was beginning to smolder and smoke like plump persimmons that have been in the oven too long. — Isaac Emmanuel, Rio Rancho, NM

Winner: Children’s Literature



- Dorothy could hardly believe her ears as the uniformed Munchkin reeled off the citations: flying without a license, flying an unregistered building, reckless flying causing injury or death, parking in an unauthorized place, double-parking (vertical), failure to give way to pedestrians, failure to indicate, 2nd-degree witchslaughter, and closing her eyes she fervently prayed, “Please, I want to go home ...” — Matthew Roscoe, Auckland, New Zealand

Runner-Up:

- Pulling her red coat tightly around her and running the gauntlet of wolf whistles from the nearby building site as she made her way to the short cut through the woods, Maureen wondered yet again why her

grandmother could not do her shopping on-line or at least get the super-market to deliver. — Elisabeth Glyptis, South Shields Tyne and Wear, England, UK

Dishonorable Mention:

- “Oh dear, Mr. Hippity Hop the Bunny is late, and if he does not arrive soon, we shan’t be able to hold a birthday party for Good Old Busy Beaver before it is time for me to leave the Fluffy Forrest, which shall be most disappointing indeed,” said Susan, because she was completely smashed on the narcotics she had purchased in the alleyway behind the club from a foul-smelling yet reputable dealer called “Skullz.” — Nicolas Juzda, Montreal, Quebec
- Miss Francesca often lounged in the tiny wood beyond the stile, and here she lay languidly watching days pass into night; for it was in that good night that Miss Francesca crept so very stealthily amongst the daffodils, finding baby bunnies and mice, tearing their heads off and dragging their lifeless bodies to the back porch door of kindly old Mr. Marvenshire. — Albert T. Keyack, Ambler, PA
- After many years of constant striving, during which Timmy the Tree grew to be the tallest pine in the forest, men from the National Lumber Corporation visited the Magic Woods and told Timmy that he was to be cut down and used as fuel to further the interests of big business, and in the process he would add to the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, eventually unbalancing the planet’s ecosystem and destroying all life on Earth, all because he’d simply tried too hard. — Emily Garber, Princeton, NJ

Winner: Dark and Stormy Night



- It was a stark and dormie night at the University of Texas as the on-campus residents poured into the central quad, where the shimmering, wafting, piercing, soaking beams from an authentic Longhorn cheese moon lit the walls of the encircling buildings the way a really large flashlight using AA batteries dimly brightens a cavernous mineshaft, for the results of the city leaders’ baking contest, hoping that they’d be able to shag some pies from the Austin Powers. — Bill Crowley, Santa Rosa, CA

Runner-Up:

- Toadstool, the lackey of the evil black wizard Dar Kand who had kidnapped and hid Off-White’s knight in shining armor (Snow Off-White was a princess by birthright and a detective by profession), had his head stuck between the floor and one of Off-White’s leather boots; Off-White’s question was simple, “Where did Dar Kand store my knight?” — John Grayshaw, Bayside, NY

Dishonorable Mention:

- Marie-Antoinette, the dusky-eyed Comtesse de la Belle Blague that is, rather than the more famous wife of Louis XVI, although coincidentally she was in fact descended from the same aristocratic stock, looked out across the windswept, storm-lashed terrace where her soiree had been in full swing up until a few minutes ago and apologized seductively to her English guest: “C’est vraiment une nuit sombre et orageuse, but later per’aps I can make amends ...” — Francis Turner, Mouans Sartoux, France

Miscellaneous Dishonorable Mentions

- While Karen hand-made bows on her pixie bow maker, and Calvin designed photo nametags on his computer, he couldn't help but wonder if Martha Stewart could see them, would she invite them for drinks by a fire started from rubbing sticks together on a hearth she masoned herself with stones hauled by reindeer over the North Pole from a remote Norwegian quarry, while cherubs entertained them with flutes hand-hollowed from Jordan River bamboo and preserved for centuries in Palestinian prune sauce at room temperature? — Cindy Haynes, Bedford, MA
- It was just as she had always imagined celebrity would be, Cindy thought as she stepped dramatically into the limelight created by the flash of what seemed to be hundreds of reporters' cameras all going off at once as they screamed her name in hopes of getting just a moment of her attention—well, except for the handcuffs, the tack orange overalls, and the decidedly unglamorous sheriff's deputies leading her into the courthouse. — Debra Allen, Wichita Falls, TX
- My underwear stuck to my backside like an All-Pro cornerback to a rookie wide receiver as I browsed through the seed catalog that had mistakenly found its way into my mailbox. — Ron Calabrese, Reisterstown, MD
- Phil Peppercorn tiptoed timidly up to the bleak, nail-encrusted door that would become the entrance to his so-called home for the next eight years of his life in the fabulous underground society of bread-makers, pastry chefs, and other leavened-product producers. — Terrence Clark, Cameron Park, CA
- As Borson turned around slowly to face the source of the ridicule he was receiving, crushing the empty tin can in his powerful grip, heedless of the extra sorting that would ensue for the four teenagers working in the recycling plant for 6.85 per hour from 6:00 am EST to 5:00 pm EST on weekdays, but significantly shorter hours on weekends, the entire bar fell silent. — Peter Cruickshank, Hanover, Ontario
- As he gazed over at his aged and sickly wife lying at his side, he remembered the woman he had once known – the vibrant exciting beauty with a heart of gold and a head full of dreams – and instantly wished he had married her instead. — Julia Fernandez, Portland, OR
- Ladyfingers crackled like knuckles in the distance, and a string of Black Cats was a more substantial reminiscence of back and shoulder joints, but it was the flatulent hissing and keening of the younger kids' Vesuvius Fountains and Whistling Chasers that enlightened Lee Bob: he hated the Fourth of July because it sounded like getting up in the morning. — David Franks, Wichita, KS
- She walked around the corner and caught Big Jake ripping his boot off with his teeth once again and she could just hear the words in his growl, "What moron ever thought it was a good idea to put boots on a dog?!" — Brenda A. Getsinger, Lawrenceville, GA
- "They say danger is the most compelling emotion of them all," purred Evangeline Jones, my trench coat-clad one-time arch-nemesis, with something like a trace of real regret, if by trace you mean drawn through a translucent piece of paper over another piece of paper, that other piece of paper being the regret she was copying, like a petulant school-girl with her daddy's knives and too much time on her hands in a poorly-lit balloon factory. — James Pokines, Hickam AFB, HI
- Listless, Dr. Jekyl returned home to sift through an endless sea of undergraduate term papers, stacks of late of credit card bills, and a pile of crusty week-old dishes, but his mind was back in the laboratory, where earlier that same day his one and only dream had come to a sudden end, his prized experiment had failed miserably and he finally had to accept the fact that frozen pizza would never be any good and there was nothing science could do about it. — Joel Rodrigue, Kingston, Ontario
- "All rise," said the Judge of The Company vs. Workers' Comp., "except for those with tendonitis, eyestrain, headaches, neck pain, pinched nerves, carpal tunnel syndrome, repetitive stress injuries, lumbosacral sprain, ruptured disks, temporomandibular joint pain, chronic fatigue syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, Axis II mental disorders, smoke inhalation, amputations, electrocutions, Gulf War

Syndrome, Agent Orange exposure, anthrax poisoning, or pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis,” leaving only the two Workers’ Comp. lawyers standing in the courtroom, looking sheepishly at their feet. — Debra Rosenfeld, San Mateo, CA

- There was a time when she did not relate to life as though it were on the other side of a mesh screen on which she would press her nose close, inhale dust that was embedded in the corners of the little squares in the grid, sneeze, and back away. — Marina Salazarm, New York, NY
- As Professor Wincklespoon took a sip from his coffee, craving the caffeine that scalding hot water had seduced from the beans, his eyes fell on an old equation he had written down years ago, metaphorically speaking, for the falling of his eyes should not be taken literally, and suddenly it struck him, as if his mind had been cleared by the same stormy wind that had brought a dark cloud overhead, two million volts of electricity from that same cloud and gone were the man and his equation, the solution to the theory of everything. — Sander van Daatselaar, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Throwing his moccasined feet forward with the delicate assurance of a skilled tracker, Silver Cloud Stevens paused to cautiously swing a flaxen braid over his manly right shoulder, and in that brief pause became intensely and intoxicatingly aware of the one sixtieth Navajo blood surging through his veins and steering him toward the grey SUV he had earlier nestled somewhere in the vast metallic foliage of the mall parking lot; his instincts whispered “Row J, near the Cinnabon.” — Brook Sprague, Coeur d’Alene, Idaho
- It was then that Caroline remembered her kitchen back in Montana, with a stove that she might or might not have turned off, and so with a heavy sigh, she put down the penguin. — Mona E. Xu, Forest Hills, NY
- You don’t know about me vitout you have read a book – vell, to tell da trute, you wouldn’t know me anyway, because no book is out dere already dat tells about my earlier vacky adventures vit anudder kid; so vat I’m gonna do is describe to you here in my wery own vinsomely vhmiscial dialect da yootful escapades of yours truly, a scrappy liddle Norvegian, radder dan dose of some scrappy liddle Finn. — Julie Stangeland, Wichita, KS
- “Uncle Albert!” shrieked the chubby-faced cherub of a niece who dashed excitedly through the parlor, leaping toward the arms of her favorite relative, until stopped abruptly by the sliding glass door she had failed to notice, leaving her for a moment curiously suspended in space like a happy, golden-curved pancake with special anti-gravity powers, before slipping slowly to the floor. — Ian Monteith, Regina, Saskatchewan
- “If I may beg your pardon, my dear lady, I happened to catch your eye from across the room and I was entranced by the beauty therein, the pure and unveiled light of honesty flashing bravely at me, the sweet coyness couched in the depths of your green iris like a dolphin in the sea, the smooth marble of your soul in my hand which drew me hither to you,” said the dark stranger, returning the glass orb to his hostess, who gratefully popped it back in place with a soft sucking sound. — Nicole Dixon, New Haven, CT
- And so rosy-fingered Dawn awakened him, first with light counterclockwise strokes, then with gentle kneading, and finally with relentless ticklings that made him rue ever buying her finger paint. — Thomas Fox, Riverdale, New York
- “No use crying over spilt milk” she laughed as she handed him a paper towel to clean up the milk from the toppled carton, which had, in a torrent, poured across the table (a gray formica and chrome art deco reproduction), slowing to a trickle by the time it came to the edge, where it finally dripped to the floor, the droplets exploding on contact and looking like those in the photograph in that old advertisement for the Milk Advisory Board. — Mary Gibson, San Juan Bautista, CA
- Jenny’s water broke at the most inopportune time – just as her daughter was rounding third base in her first tee-ball game, pigtails flying backwards under her batting helmet, pudgy legs piston-like in her bright blue baggy nylon shorts, the coach yelling “Run! Run!” in the same rhythm that Jenny’s husband had used

when he impregnated her and with which he urged “Breathe! Breathe!” during their Lamaze class. — Wendy Chatley Green, Lexington, KY

- To put it in a nutshell – though, not an ordinary hazelnut-shell, because this would be far too small – and not a walnut-shell either, though it is bigger in size but too rounded – unfortunately, a cashew nut is too crooked – a peanut would come pretty close in length but it is too narrow – a chestnut has too odd a form to be suitable – and a Brazil nut is too unknown and not suitable either – it is more or less a complete virtual nutshell I am talking about: to put it in such a nutshell this story has nothing to do with nuts at all. — Hilja Stöber, Berlin, Germany
- Lady Eva floated down the stairs like a luminescent ghost with lush, over-ripe, jungle-berry scented décolletage, surveyed the room, pausing momentarily to brush a yogurt splotch from her vintage Dolce and Gabbana velvet bodice, and then boldly approached Lord McCreary, whose bald pate gleamed like the Grand Prize trophy of the ninth annual Oregon Trail Lanes League Bowling Competition. — Alissa King, St. Helens, OR
- Green, not blue as for some who stare endlessly in to sky or out to sea, gaping to find some thing of interest backlit by azure or cerulean or buried in navy or cobalt, nor red as for those who would scan field and forest for smudges of scarlet or crimson, for smears of cherry or ruby, nor yet yellow as for others who all their lives lust for gold or long for blond, nor even purple as for some who think God feloniously offended should they not notice violet or lilac, lavender or plum, is my second favorite color. — David Kinzel, Billerica, MA
- “Mummy’s gone to Paris to buy hats, and Daddy’s pranged the Bentley,” Fiona responded with a mélange of wry acceptance and distant promise, her ring-less fingers playing slippily on the moist champagne flute in a way that suggested to the normally jaded Sir Jeremy far more than merely imbibing Bucks Fizz . — Mrs. Juliet Toland, Muang, Phuket, Thailand
- The moon looked like a discarded toenail clipping submersed in a puddle of saliva on a black formica countertop. — Lindsay Robertson, Brooklyn, NY
- Having opened my 40th birthday present from my husband – a kitchen window fan – and now on my way to the bakery to pick up my cake, I started thinking: What if I get hit in this intersection, and, struck with amnesia, I hobble to the edge of the highway, hungry and confused, and am picked up by a lonely trucker headed for McDonald’s and since I have no memory, I’ve forgotten I hate McDonald’s, so I hop in, and he – just thankful for the company – figures I’m a middle-aged housewife looking for love in all the wrong places and he’s got several of them? — Cynthia Mizner Walgren, Chadron, NE

Fans, Stalkers, and Others

Mariann Simms, winner of the 2003 contest, [writes about the BLFC in her blog](#). (April 2006)

Celine Shinbutsu: [Fantasy Category winner’s blog from Japan](#).

[Suite.101.com interviews 2008 Winner Garrison Spik](#) (August 16, 2008)

[Suite.101.com interviews the Grand Panjandrum](#) (August 16, 2008)

[Guillaume Destot interviews the Grand Panjandrum](#) (2002)

[“The Great Bulwer-Lytton Debate”](#) (Manchester Guardian)

[Sticks and Stones](#) (a “new” contest, last updated August 2010)

[Bulwer-Lytton's Ancestral Estate](#)

Bulwer-Lytton's Bicentennial Birthday Celebration at Knebworth House. [With pictures](#). (May 20-23, 2003)

[Literary Locales](#): Over 1,350 picture links to places that figure in the lives and writings of famous authors

[The Eye of Argon](#) (a Sci-Fi conference classic)

[Dead White Guys](#)

[Dead Dogs](#)

[Shakespearean insult?](#)

[Bad Sex in Fiction Award](#)

[It Was a Dark and Stormy Night — the game for people who love to read](#)

[Dickens or Bulwer?](#)

“Dark and Stormy Night Cocktail” from the [Swig Bar](#) in San Francisco: Pour ginger beer into a highball glass and top with Zaya rum.

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