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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Put Down That pencil

By Jim Henderson

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You're surrounded, commanded the booming metallic voice from outside. Give yourself up!

The occupant inside the barricaded room defiantly replies, I'm not giving up!

Moments later a squad of black uniformed men in combat boots burst into the room amid a shower of splinters. The remnants of the door lay in pieces under their feet. Every man's rifle is pointed at the "suspect".

Stand back, he menaces threateningly! I've got a weapon. I've used it before and if I have to, I'll use it again. Brandishing a pencil, he waves it about wildly. Another pencil is tucked behind his ear. The SWAT team freezes. It's their worst scenario, the one they dread the most, a deranged "writer".

Put down that pencil before someone gets hurt, the squad leader calmly intones. We've got to take you in.

On what grounds, the belligerent man stammers? "Impersonating an author" is the reply.

For a moment the suspect hesitates, trigger fingers flex nervously. Silence, and then the squad leader speaks. It doesn't have to be like this, he attempts to reason with the potential assailant. All the while, every member of the SWAT team is thinking to himself, What if that pencil goes off? Adjectives and verbs and other projectiles could fill the room with their deadly spray. And everyone knows that names really can hurt you!

The suspect appears confused and angry. You don't understand, no one does. Not my wife, the kids, or my boss at work. Even my own mother thinks I'm crazy to want to be a writer! His voice trails off, You don't think I'm crazy, do you? Of course not, said, the officer. Both men know he's lying.

For a brief moment, there is silence in the standoff. The situation appears to be stabilized, yet precariously perched on the precipice of chaos. The sergeant glances around the room. He is appalled

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by the sight, the obvious signs of an addict are all around! Pads of paper, writing journals, ...and the pencils! Those deadly implements of senseless verbiage and prose. A trash can off to side is surrounded, overflowing with crumpled wads of attempted literary efforts. It's much worse than I thought. If only someone seen the signs, had turned him in, he could have gotten help. But now it's come to this. Another literary "wannabe" with delusions of grandeur.

The silence is broken by the sergeant. You want to talk about it...you know, tell me how this happened?

It all started so innocently, he said, lowering his guard. A book report here, an essay there. One thing leads to another and before you know it...his voice falters. Before you know it you're doing lap tops and then word processors. I can't stop myself. A few words here, a sentence or two there. Then the

paragraphs, I can't get the paragraphs to stop. They're in my head!

He didn't have to say a word, the real horror was told in the eyes of the suspect. The extent of his condition was broadcast by those glazed over eyes from staring for hours at a blank, luminescent monitor. His hand moves slowly toward a keyboard, his fingers began to twitch around the keys uncontrollably.

He continues after a pause. The disease spread. At first I'm shoving manuscripts at a few of my friends but there not interested. At first they tried to be nice but soon they avoid me. Now I'm asking total strangers to proof read for me!

A negotiator is called in to defuse the terse standoff. We can help, he says. A padded cell, we'll get you some counseling, and a good treatment program. With any luck, you can beat this. Afterwards, we'll relocate you, set you up with AA, Author's Anonymous. Listen to me, I know what you're going through, it's happened to me too. An audible gasp fills the room, uneasy members of the swat team glance at each other nervously.

For the first time, the suspect appears to consider surrender. He ponders before he replies. What will happen if I don't turn myself in, he questions?

It will go hard on you, probably incarceration. Maybe even...he falters.

No, the suspect gasps, not.. not a rejection letter!

Yes, I'm afraid so!

With that, he surrenders and is escorted to a waiting patrol car to be whisked away. All right, the squad leader announces to the crowd that gathered around to watch, Go home! It's all over now. The crisis has been resolved...

...or has it?

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Sergeant, a team member urgently cries out. Come here quick! He is obviously in a state of panic. What is it, man?

One of the pencils is missing! Someone must have gotten it.

Here we go again!

Jim Henderson is currently employed in the field of environmental regulatory compliance. He enjoys writing as a past time and has had several articles published in various on-line publications.

What Is A Still Life?

By Paolo Basauri

Still Life is an art term, that refers to a special kind of picture. It represents an arrange of inanimate objects (hence the name) such as a bowl, a cup or fruits. Usually the arrangement is made according to the artist's purpose. A Still life pencil drawing can be symbolic, with an underlying meaning, or aesthetic, in which case the purpose is to communicate beauty.

About Still Life Pencil Drawings

A still life work can have many purposes. If we work in color it can help us understand how color acts in real life, how the light bounces, and how an arrangement of colors can bring a special mood to the painting. Using colored pencils we can begin studies about color, and work in the finest details. But in the case of black and white pencil drawings, the purpose of the still life pencil drawing is different. A still life pencil drawing can help us study shapes and see how they interact on our eyes, we learn how to measure correct proportions and how they can make the difference between a good drawing and a remarkable drawing.

When we get into shading, we then study tonal values. There are no colors here so we must learn how to see things in black and white mode, and correctly define which are going to be the dark and light areas on our still life pencil drawing.

Still lifes are the most available subjects in the world, and while some people may consider still life drawing boring, the fact is they teach us a lot. When you have no idea of what to draw, just make an arrangement of things you have at your house and start your still life pencil drawing. Don't take just as bring cups and fruits, but instead focus on what you can learn from this. If you keep practicing on drawing still life scenes you will find out that you have a much better understanding on how light works, and how objects relate to each other within a composition and color scheme.

Paolo Basauri is the owner of Pencil Drawing Madness, a blog about drawing, where you can find more about Still Life Drawing

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