

THE THRILL OF WRITING A BLITZ POEM -TOGETHER
BY CATHERINE HORN AND LINDA HORTICK

Writing poetry opens my soul
Writing poetry is challenging

These two provocative lines, written by Linda Hortick, a Letters member of Greenwich (CT) Pen Women (GPW), were the inception of an intriguing poem that captures the heart, mind, and spirit of those who love poetry. The poem takes the reader on a journey from the original idea, through the myriad thoughts and feelings that ebb and flow from one writer to the other leading to the creation of a lyrical piece about self-acceptance and the gift of expressing oneself through the passionate love of poetry.

GPW has a very active Letters group consisting of many multi-talented writers whose work represents a wide array of genres. In April, 2021, in the middle of the pandemic, Barbara Ehrentreu, a published and award winning author and poet, formed a Zoom sub-group of Letters for members that were interested in writing poetry. Barbara said, "My intention was to create a group that was non-judgmental and to educate members about the art of writing poetry."

At one of these meetings, Linda Horlick, told the group about an article in Writer's Digest, that described a Blitz poem - a 50-line poem with eight specific rules. It intrigued her so much she asked the group to embark on the challenge of writing a Blitz. She asked if anyone wanted to join her in this endeavor. Cathy Horn, a retired educator and school psychologist and writer of memoir, children's stories and poems, accepted the offer.

For the next several weeks, emails and text messages flew back and forth between Cathy and Linda. They discovered that while their writing styles differed, they were well-matched as poetic partners. The collaborative process was rewarding and exhilarating as they communicated, sometimes multiple times a day, sending lines back and forth to each other for approval and inspiration. While waiting for each other to create two lines at a time was exciting and thought-provoking, it was also sometimes stressful. Some lines seemed to write themselves with the words and phrases coming together seamlessly like a perfectly formed puzzle. At other times it was difficult trying to find just the right words. They were always respectful and usually flexible but there were instances when one or the other held firm. They needed to agree 100% before they moved on to the next two lines.

What began as simply a new, creative endeavor resulted in much more. As the poem grew in meaning and dimension, a friendship blossomed between the two women that deepened as the poem expanded and reached conclusion. The finished poem would come to be named "Challenging the Soul." Linda said, "That is the best part of the fun. A Blitz poem is named after the last few lines are written almost at the end of the poem." Cathy and Linda were amazed at how accurate the title turned out to be as it related to the content of the poem.

Recently, Linda wrote, "Writing a Blitz poem was a thrilling experience. The words just poured from our hearts and minds. When we write poetry, we feel exhilaration and soar. What was dormant in us now sparks new energy within us. Igniting this fire causes a renaissance and rebirth of our creativity. We are humbled by those feelings and follow our instincts. We crave the intellectual and spiritual elevation we feel when creating. So, we return again to our love of poetry to express and fulfill ourselves. Be prepared though, when the poem is finished, you come back to earth, and the only way to feel that way again, is to write another Blitz poem with a partner."

Cathy added, "Working together with Linda on this project was inspiring and helped me to grow as a writer. Linda's approach encouraged me to think beyond language to find new and different ways to show, not just to tell, what I feel about this powerful form of expression. We think our finished poem speaks for many creative women. Writing poetry challenges our souls and ultimately enriches our lives."

Challenging the Soul: A Blitz Poem

By Cathy Horn and Linda Hortick

Writing poetry opens my soul
Writing poetry is challenging
Challenging expectations
Challenging ideas
Ideas sprouting like new seeds
Ideas appearing as miracles

Miracles revealing insights
Miracles turning dark to light
Light lifting heaviness
Light letting the words flow
Flow like a river to the sea
Flow from feelings to my poems
Poems exposing my tender soul
Poems illuminating my thoughts
Thoughts reshaping emotions
Thoughts evolving into creativity
Creativity that was dormant
Creativity awakening intellectual energy
Energy prompting motivation
Energy leading to inspiration
Inspiration I can barely contain
Inspiration making my heart soar
Soar to heights unimagined
Soar beyond my wildest expectations
Expectations of reaching the highest plateau
Expectations finally achieved
Achieved satisfaction
Achieved my dreams
Dreams about writing poetry
Dreams about doing what I love
Love expressing my passion
Love and words pouring out of my being
Being creative fuels my soul
Being creative enriches my life
Life without poetry would be desolate
Life writing poetry leads to fulfillment
Fulfillment of goals
Fulfillment of aspirations
Aspirations staying true to myself
Aspirations validating I am enough
Enough as a writer
Enough as a person
Person delighting in the power of words
Person exhilarated by the renaissance
Renaissance reviving my being
Renaissance the manifestation of my soul
Soul the center of my humanity
Soul my breath of life reborn writing poetry
Poetry
Humanity

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