

Odyssey Oracle

Created for and by the students of the UW-Madison Odyssey Project

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The break and the F-word

by Corinthians Reece

I joined a men's accountability group. We are men invested in each other who love each other enough to commit ourselves and our time to each other to coach, mentor, and admonish each other with love, the best advice, and truth, as if we were each other's own brother or son.

One morning while we were having breakfast, the topic of fear

popped up. We talked about how this emotion has crippled each of us in one way or another. We then began to talk about how it could have affected some of the world's greatest leaders if they had allowed it to inhibit them. What would have been the outcome of this country if Martin Luther King, Jr. had denied the request to spearhead the Civil Rights Movement? He had every reason to refuse. Marriage, kids, a freshman career—his time to give his life for his country couldn't have been any more untimely.

My friend Anthony Ward (Odyssey '04) said, "It's cool to be scared, but we can't allow that fear to stop us from doing what we ought to be doing in life."

A week prior to this, a friend

*Fear is an important
and useful emotion,
like hunger or love.
It's part of how we
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Corinthians Reece

had asked me for my advice considering a song that he was asked to perform in church. I told him that God had given him the ability to minister the song, not so much for his own glory but for someone else to benefit from, so how could he possibly sit there and say that there must have been a mistake about the request. I informed him that it was cool to be afraid, that it's a part of life. But to allow that fear to debilitate and prevent us from doing the job that God has put us here to do is insulting to God at best.

If by chance the concept of God is too much for us to accept or agree with, then allow me to restate it this way: for us to allow fear to dictate what we say and what we refrain from saying, or what we do and what we decide not to do, insults all the hard work of every ancestor who worked as hard as they did with the hopes

of our welfare or every teacher who went the extra mile to love even us.

Honestly, the number one weapon that has been used to suffocate the dreams and aspirations of mankind is not only an old one but also outdated and an insult to our integrity and strength.

So on the 15th of January I stood backstage

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at the Overture Center, getting ready to play a duet for a Martin Luther King, Jr. ceremony. I was nervous. I didn't know how I could introduce my part into the song. The approach that I wanted to take was pretty difficult the first time I tried it, so I was pretty leery about it.

I went back to the dressing room



and asked God to take all credit for my attempt at honoring Dr. King, to give me the courage and the strength to play this song with the best of my ability. I prayed that God accept this as my attempt to address my fear of playing in front of people.

Fear is an important and useful emotion, like hunger or love. It's part of how we were wired. It's a part of who we are. It also can give us the right amount of energy to articulate our points. Fear can help us explain or illustrate exactly what we want to express, teach, or convey. It just may be the element that our listener needs to hear in order to relate to our song.

When I finished, people clapped and said I was very good. I was offered a position on the King Coalition and promised more opportunities to play with Mr. Leotha Stanley.

We all experience fear. We just need to learn how to wield it, like a kind of weapon, to honor God, our ancestors, our teachers, and ourselves.

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Oracle

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Definition and Examples of Sonnets

Sonnets were first written in Italian and were traditionally love poems. Though the sonnet is a form that can be experimented with, it has remained true to its original length of fourteen lines and its Anglicized meter of iambic pentameter. Petrarch developed the sonnet to one of its highest levels during early Renaissance Italy, but it wasn't translated into English until the sixteenth century. From there, Shakespeare made the sonnet famous in England and others followed his lead.

The sonnet can be thematically divided into two sections:

the first presents the theme, raises an issue or doubt, and the second part answers the question, resolves the problem, or drives home the poem's point. This change in the poem is called the turn and helps move forward the emotional action of the poem quickly, as fourteen lines can become too short too fast.

Most sonnets are one of two kinds:

Italian (Petrarchan)- this sonnet is split into two parts, an octave and a sestet. The octave is composed of two envelope quatrains rhyming "abba abba" (Italian octave). The sestet's rhyme pattern varies, though it is most often either "cde cde" (Italian sestet) or "cdc dcd" (Sicilian sestet). The turn occurs at the end of the octave and is developed and closed in the sestet. Over the years, the Italian sonnet has been the most favored type of sonnet. English (Shakespearean)- this contains 3 Sicilian quatrains and one heroic couplet at the end, with an "abab cdcd efef gg" rhyme scheme.

The turn comes at or near line 13, making the ending couplet quick and dramatic. Not many modern writers have taken to writing the Shakespearean sonnet.

Shakespeare's

Sonnet #116.

Let me not to the marriage of true
minds
Admit impediments. Love is not
love
Which alters when it alteration
finds,
Or bends with the remover to
remove:

Oh, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is
never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering
bark,
Whose worth's unknown,
although his height be taken.

Love's not time's fool, though
rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's
compass come,
Love alters not with his brief
hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge
of doom.

If this be error and upon me
proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever
loved.



Kegan's sonnet

Procrastination will be my demise
Although I try to always plan
ahead
My thoughts, my actions fail to
compromise
Deterring me from work that I
now dread.

I'd love to study Edgar Allan Poe
Or take some time to learn a
minuet
Then pressing issues always seem
to grow
To conquer some, while some are
left in debt.

Alas! My Spanish homework's
overdue
Earth History is not that far
behind
My yoga teacher had thought I
withdrew
Creative Writing? Well...no,
nevermind.

Take pity on my fourteen credit
state,
And don't judge me if you
procrastinate!

A Prayer for Obie by Yasmin Horton

Even though I had the opportunity to see the Nutcracker Ballet at the Overture Center (which was great), attend a luncheon at the Madison Club as a guest of the Business Forum (an exclusive women's club), and travel to Chicago (to attend the Chicago Regional Convention of Narcotics Anonymous), the most important memory of my break was going to Oak Forest Hospital in Illinois to see my brother Obie.

Obie is 54 years old and was the victim of a stroke on December 17, 2006. Since then, he has gone from being in a coma

to very low brain response. On seeing Obie, my heart was really torn. The once vibrant guy whom I've known all my life cannot even speak my name or acknowledge, beyond a blink of the eyes, that he's aware of my presence.

Next month, Obie will celebrate two years clean. I pray to God for a full recovery for my third oldest brother and my mother's middle of nine children. I also ask my class and anyone who believes in the power of prayer to petition God on behalf of Obie Horton to make a full and speedy recovery.



New Year's Eve at Emily's

by Angela McAlister



I started out December 31st like any other day, giving thanks to God for waking me up this morning, and then I thought, "This is a special day for two reasons. One, this is the dawn of a new year and I'm still cancer free (Hallelujah), and two, today is Emily's New Year's Eve celebration."

I'd been looking forward to Emily's party ever since she extended the invitation to the class. I invited a friend to accompany me to the party and waited with joyful anticipation for him to arrive. Emily lived out off Highway M in Middleton, where they had purchased and renovated a 175-year-old barn, and like a little kid who can't wait to open a present, I couldn't wait to see it.

We didn't have any trouble finding the house with the directions we were given. As we were driving up the long, dark drive, I had a feeling that this house was going to be awesome. And boy, was I right!

We were greeted at the door by Emily and her husband, Keith Meyer, and right away I felt welcome. The house was filled with glowing warmth, and the atmosphere was festive. There were people throughout the house, some in conversation, some relaxing by the fireplace and listening to the melodious tunes being played on the piano by Emily's father, Professor Robert Auerbach. Some were eating and drinking, some touring this wonderful house,

some playing games or watching television, all right at home.

My friend started talking with Coach and his wife like they were old friends. I was drawn to the room where the wonderful music was coming from. A couple of my classmates were sitting there, along with some other people, enthralled by the playing. As I sat down to listen, a man started singing; I recognized him as Gregory Brumfield, whom Emily had invited to our class to do a rendition of Frederick Douglass. His voice was wonderful, with a mélange of ranges that fit right in with what Emily's father played.

After awhile I sought out my friend to take a tour of this wonderful home. The entranceway alone is impressive with what looked to be stone inlaid floors of warm earth colors. Down a couple of stairs, you find a piano and nice, cozy, soft furniture that you could lose yourself in, but what made this room was the big, scenic, sun-catching windows.

On the second level, there were bedrooms and bathrooms. Emily and Keith's bedroom was spacious, with lots of windows that overlooked the land surrounding the house. The room was decorated in simple neutral tones that gave it a warm, inviting feel; actually, the whole house felt that way.

As the clock edged toward midnight, we were given noisemakers, our glasses were filled with the beverage of our choice, and all rang in the New Year with glasses raised, wishing each other Happy New Year. I truly had a wonderful time and couldn't think of a better way to have welcomed in 2007. Thank you Emily and family.

Back Where Everyone Is Someone by Troy Terry

One thing I did over the holiday season was to get back in touch with myself, reality, and others in the Odyssey Class of 2007.

Well, I guess I can start my story out by simply apologizing to the class of 2007 Odyssey Project. Sorry for my departure into the unknown. It was quite scary for me

*I knew I belonged
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themselves.*

personally, I must admit, because I became homeless, working in different drug houses and using to the point where I didn't even care. Once one of the drug houses I worked at got raided, though, I was brought back to reality a little bit.

Thank you, Derrick and Emily, for reaching out to me with the support of hair-cuts and PDQ cards. . . .

Christmas Eve was rather interesting because I saw Yasmin Horton at True Worshippers Church, and then to top that off I saw Sonia Spencer at Calvary Gospel Church that evening. Then I knew I belonged back where everyone was someone, or at least learning about others and themselves. Thank you, Yasmin and Sonia, for just being yourselves and keeping it real.

One of the most difficult things for me was to go to Emily's office with Corey Reece. I thought I'd be judged, scolded, and even

looked down on, but Emily was cool, non-judgmental and uncritical of me. However, I have lots of homework. Thanks, Emily, because it kept me focused on the real issues.

Kathleen, thanks for being a friend when I needed one. You didn't even know, but I lost an aunt the same day you came to Dee's place on East Washington. You helped me with homework. Keep it up, Kathleen: you're headed in the right direction.

Derrick, you are definitely a real friend as well. All you talked about was school and how you missed it, and we agreed on it. You helped me help myself realize the importance of honesty. Thanks for your help and continued support, brother, and for all the haircuts.

Just to let everyone know, Webcrafters gave me my job back, and I've been clean now for four weeks.



Marriage Counseling by Odyssey Students for Walter and Ruth from *A Raisin in the Sun*

Walter, life isn't all about money. You're blessed to have a family right in the same house as you, which many people don't have—your wife, sister, mother, son, and another child on the way. Be thankful for that, compliment Ruth, and be more playful with her. . . . Ruth, just listen to what Walter has to say sometimes, even

if it isn't that interesting to you, and just pretend you're on his side. (Stanley Sallay)

Walter, make your own damn eggs. (Jacob Hill, Odyssey '06)

I would suggest that both Ruth and Walter take the time to decorate their kids' room together. . . . Secondly, I would recommend that for at least a year, Ruth never serve eggs in any form to Walter as a goodwill gesture. (Brian Benford)

Be supportive of one another's decisions when it comes to Travis; show him that you are united when it comes to him. (Angela McAlister)

Ruth, you are a queen with or without money, and Walter, you are a king with or without money because you have each other. (Kathleen Brown)

Talk to each other as a couple, and maybe get away from the rest of the people in the house. . . . Stop at my receptionist to make the next appointment and take care of the bill. (Yasmin Horton)

Too many Negro families are being destroyed because of frustrations that we as a people have to deal with on a daily basis. Mr. Younger, I recognize the pain in your eyes from getting up day after day as you work hard chauffeuring a shiny new car for a rich, white family. . . . Mrs. Younger, my heart aches with you . . . having to go into white folks' homes to do their bidding . . . Of course the burden of these hard days creeps into your home and your relationship with each other each day. . . . We're going to work together, examining the importance of our African roots and Negro history in the development of the Negro family in America today. *Yes, I said African!* (Oroki Rice)



Restaurant Reviews

Sardine worth a try—but leave the kids home

by Diane Dennis

If your budget can afford Sardine, give it a try.

My husband turned 50 on December 30th, and I made reservations for Sardine, a French cuisine restaurant that had received good reviews from colleagues. I made the reservation for four, but the



friends who were going with us had to cancel, so we took our two teenagers, 19 and 17, who've enjoyed a lot of different foods.

The restaurant is in the old Fauerbach Brewery building on Williamson Street, next to the bicycle shop on Lake Monona. I drive home past that building every day and never noticed the sign. When we arrived and drove behind the building, we saw a big neon sign saying "Sardine." There's no sign on the street sign, which I find a bit strange.

We checked in and were seated immediately toward the street sign. There are a lot of tables in the restaurant, which has a high-beamed ceiling and is very open. It still has the warehouse feel and a loud but pleasant atmosphere. Our waiter was very knowledgeable.

I decided to try the salmon with lentils, spinach and portabella mushrooms, since I'm very partial to salmon. My husband and son had the veal, and my daughter had mussels. I tried a bit of everyone's, and all were excellent. The sizes of the meals were more than adequate; my daughter and I took leftovers home. The meals were in the \$20 range. They did have warm bread before the meal.

The restrooms were in the basement but done in very nice taste.

Our teenagers, not in the mood for fine dining, were somewhat annoying, but the food came extremely quickly, so we didn't have to listen to them long. We all enjoyed our meals, and I would definitely try it again—without our teenagers.

The Copper Top Restaurant by Drake Carter, son of Kegan Carter

We went to The Copper Top Restaurant. It is a very sophisticated establishment. I ordered pancakes with two sausage links. The pancakes tasted like corn bread because I think that is what they used instead of pancake mix. It was good, but I'm used to the ones my mom makes. After that we ordered four slices of pie and one slice of cake. I had a slice of key lime pie and my sisters had a slice of Boston cream pie, a slice of cake, and a slice of banana cream pie. My mom had a slice Bavarian cream pie. My sister said, "The cake was good, but the pies weren't that great."

The waitress was polite. She said "Hello," and was very nice. The

dishes were priced seven dollars or less. The waitresses had a board that had a list of the day's specials. The restaurant is next to the highway and the miniature golf course. My sisters,



Antonya and Chandler, ordered pancakes also, and my play sister Aerial had a chicken wrap. My mom had French toast with hash browns and a vegetable omelet on the side. I had some of my mom's French toast and a slice of the omelet. The French toast was good and so was the omelet.

Copper Top is one of the best places to eat.

Drake Carter will be assisting with photography and writing for the Odyssey Oracle Junior. If you have children or grandchildren who are willing to contribute, please send items to one of the three editors listed on page two.

Movie Review**Unity, loyalty, and
'chests out of this
world'*****Stomp the Yard*****by Kathleen Brown**

Over the break I took my five-year-old and six-month-old children to the show to see *Stomp the Yard*. Both my children are addicted to music, so they both sat still through the entire movie. What I got out of the movie is when you join a fraternity, it's a lifelong bond.

It's about a team of people making one sound, the sound of unity and loyalty, a sound that can be heard by others but understood in the soul of the person making the sound.



And the young men in the movie had chests out of this world. I was thinking of dropping everything, moving to Atlanta, and soliciting

young fraternity boys. Like the woman in the romance *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, I'm going to get my step on!!!

Music Review**Who knew classical
could be funny?*****Viennese Christmas*****by Juanita Wilson**

My daughter, Stephanie, and I attended *A Viennese Christmas* at the Overture Center. It was so entertaining.

I never thought of classical

music as being humorous. The conductor directed the music so that it was humorous and lighthearted. We laughed at the antics of the soloist as we cheered for their talented voices.

The audience participated with clapping of hands when directed to do so.

We made an honest but humorous mistake. We were

looking for Vietnamese performers from Vietnam. We were saying, "Well, maybe that violinist is a Vietnamese, or maybe that soloist is from Vietnam." Then finally someone mentioned Vienna. Then we said, "Oh! It's Viennese." We continued laughing all the way home.

