

Date: _____
English 30B

False Starts

by Thomas Hunt

Bret sat down at his typewriter. He began typing:

"Twas the best of times, twas the worst of times. My friend Johnny was in England, where he had just thrown up all over the bar in a pub called the Queen of England. When I say thrown up all over the bar, I mean the actual bar-bar, where they serve the drinks. He spewed and spewed and spewed....."

Bret spun the paper out of the typer and threw it at the trashcan. It bounced off the rim and landed on the floor by some other crumpled up wads. Bret loaded a new piece of paper from the pile, took a deep breath and started again:

"Once upon a time there was a moocow who liked to stomp on baby tuckoos going down the road. He sang "La La La La La" as he smashed and danced. The moocow saw the moon and smiled joy with happiness.

En Vino Veritas

--Suddenly the moocow slept over the mooncow and sawto things that were the same.

--Poff doff moff coff said the expectant christian moocow. I'm lost in my mindcow jawcow lawcow."

Crumple. Toss. Trash. this time in the can. POW! An idea. He spun the wheel and began typing at a blazing speed:

"In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me a piece of ass that I've been turning over and over ever since. She was beautiful, blonde and smiled when I talked. Sure she'd been my father's concubine first and that fact made me the victim of many a boring conversation at college and often left me confused."

The typewriter ejected and the trash can received. In the name of the father and the son and the holy spirit. Another piece in the typer, another idea:

"We were somewhere around Barstow, on the edge of the desert, when the blondes started to take control. They had guns and we didn't. They took the car, the drugs, the multicolored galaxy of uppers, downers, laughers, screamers, rippers, a quart of rum, a quart of tequila, a salt shaker half full of cocaine, and most importantly of all, the ether. I was worried about those girls as they drove off and left me and my attorney stranded in the

desert, no cash, no story for the magazine, we didn't even have the cherry red caddy. But those girls. They had the drugs and they were heading for Vegas. The thing that worried me was the ether. There is nothing more dangerous and depraved than two girls in hotpants with handguns in the depths of an ether binge."

Click clock, three point shot. New page. Bret wasn't giving up. He wasn't that type:

"If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't really care for magicians. They scare me with their infinite smile assistants and their black magic. I mean if there was really a rabbit under your hat, you should not pass go and go directly to an insane asylum. I know I would. Anyway I just wanted to write about some stuff that happened to me while I was playing baseball for my rec team in Berkley. Our name was Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Rye. I wasn't a great baseball player but I showed up. Since I was always there, they made me Catcher. I didn't mind, except for all the gay jokes, and for chissake, the umpire's hand on my ass. That was something I could've done without."

Bret ejected the page and introduced it to the others, in the trash. Then he got up and put a pretty major dent in the trash can with his foot. He then loaded another piece of paper and sat down. His hands hovered above the keys, waiting to begin, but then he looked out the window. It was a bright sunny day. The old tire swing was swaying in the breeze. Bret stood up, grabbed his sunglasses and headed outside.

After Bret was gone, his typewriter breathed a sigh of relief and began typing:

"Dear Mr. Tom Robbins,

I was very disappointed to see your poor treatment of your Remington SL3 Electric typewriter in your recent book *Still Life with Woodpecker*. I myself am a Remington SL3 typewriter, and when a writer is talented and willing, I am more than capable of describing anything, from a love story to a treatise on foreign policy. I was especially displeased with your ending where you threw your typewriter out the window and finished the book in longhand. Typewriters have a bad enough time in this world without people like you suggesting extreme violence towards them.

Sincerely yours,

Mr. Jack Remington, Model #31394"