



Fioretti

# **FIORETTI**

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This edition of **Fioretti** is lovingly dedicated to our classmate and friend Kurt Cleeter, who passed away this past December. We hold him dearly in our hearts.

**Editors**  
April Duff and Stephanie Fort  
**Assiting Editor**  
Lisa Horner  
**Advisor**  
Sr. Stella Gampfer, O.S.F.  
**Artistic Design**  
Julie Maraszkievicz

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## Why I Write

by Kurt Cleeter

There are as many reasons for writing as there are people in the world. Each person has distinctive desires, philosophies, and needs that are unique, yet similar. Probably the majority of people write for no other reasons than to make money, to fulfill educational requirements, or to inflate their own vanity, but even for these people, there exist more compelling reasons. Writing, unlike talking, allows a person to see, analyze, and refine his thoughts.

Presently, I write for all of the above reasons except to make money and perhaps someday, that will be another reason. There is enormous satisfaction in placing thoughts on paper. It must be the same type of feeling that a farmer has when looking at his field at harvest time. To get to this point, he started with an empty field, plowed it, seeded it, nurtured it, and finally harvests it. The writer does the same thing with words. He starts with a blank sheet, formulates an idea, writes it, modifies it, and then views the finished product. Although, both the farmer and writer may acknowledge that the finished product could, and probably should, have been better, they can not think too long on the shortcomings, but must plan for what comes next.

I was introduced to creative writing in the

fourth grade. At the time, I thought that it was a difficult assignment, but by the time I entered the fifth and sixth grades, I was enjoying writing about daily activities, summer vacations, and special events. During my high school years and most of college, the enjoyment of creative writing took a "back seat" to the drudgery of analyzing other people's writings. But in hindsight, that is not as bad as it seemed. I have been introduced to some great authors and the analyzing of their plays, books, and poems has become interesting. Probably the most enjoyable part is the reading of the authors' biographies; they have such varied personalities and many of them have very interesting lives. Originally, I assumed that everything these authors wrote is a masterpiece and that only those with a "gift" could write such stories. Although I still believe that these people possess special talents, the more that I read about different authors, the more human these "gifted" writers become. With only a few exceptions, my interest in writing increased with each book I read.

It is very possible that none of my writings will ever be viewed by anyone except myself, but for me, that is acceptable. In fact, some of my writings are for me and me alone. One thing that I have discovered is that the more I write, the more

that I want to write. Nothing I do seems to satisfy me; there are so many imperfections in every line and sometimes modifications seem to make it even worse.

So why do I write? Do I want to become another Homer, Shakespeare, Hemingway, London, or Lawrence? Yes, that would be very nice, but that is not the main reason I write. Basically, I am conceited enough that I want to see my thoughts in print. It is not that these thoughts are important or that they will change the world for the better, but they are of value to me. If nothing else, they are a chronological recording of my ability to think and put my thoughts into written words. It allows me to see, analyze, and refine these thoughts.

## Up and Down

Kurt Cleeter

Sometimes it does not take much to cause the brain cells to begin activity. One day last summer while I was roaming around a shopping center, I saw two women talking, and as I went past them, one of them said, "I'm going up north to visit my parents this weekend." The other one replied, "You should do that. Family is very important. I went down south to visit my brother a couple of weeks ago." Although some people might say that their speech may not have been grammatically correct, it did illustrate how people think about "up" and "down."

There can be no dispute that what is "up" to one person, may be "down" to another. A man sitting on a chair may look down at his bulging stomach, but a child may look up to see it. Most of us accept that "up" is in the direction of the sky and "down" is in the direction of the Earth. Now, "up north" and "down south" is another matter.

Many people, at least in the northern hemisphere, have the attitude that traveling north is "up hill" and traveling south is "down hill." It is easy to understand this feeling, since all globes and maps have north at the top and south at the bottom. Everyone knows that top is up and bottom is down. Just for ease of explanation, forget that the Earth's axis is inclined about twenty three and a half degrees and imagine that the North Pole is at the exact top. A person standing there could consider everything "down south." But what about the person standing on the South Pole? Is everything "up north?" This seems to be a contradiction because if he digs a hole down in the ground and goes all the way to the North Pole, he has gone down to get up to the North.

As I said, it does not take much to get the brain to begin thinking. But going down to go up, what will they think of next?



## To Do Something

Do Something this day to give happiness  
to someone whose joys may be few  
give someone support to help him drive away his  
sadness

or make someone's dreams come true  
make time for a neighborly greeting,  
time to delight and converse with a friend  
always remember my fellow classmates the days  
are fleeting

and life's latest day will soon come to an end  
inspire another and go that extra mile

Do something this day,  
that tomorrow will prove to be worthwhile  
help another conquer grief and sorrow  
and always greet the sunrise with a smile  
think of the life God has given you  
and Do something

Do something today, and put yourself to the test  
take a new challenge and give it your all

Do something that will rise above the rest  
and do not give up even though you may fall  
everyone can appreciate living

for it is only through compassion, and the giving  
of friendship, love, peace and cheer  
that we may all find the real joy of living  
and receive Heaven's happiness here.

—Neil Clayton

## Engagement

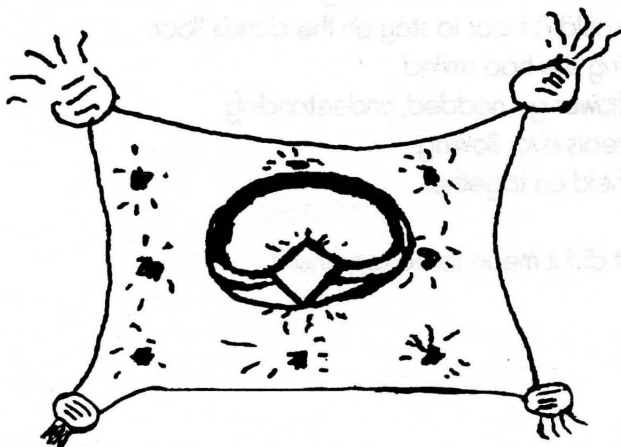
Pierce the infinite circle of gold,  
crowned by the fractured  
cutting stone.

Beams of bouncing light through the  
prisms,  
outward to the eye and  
inward to the heart.

It is a siren's call, but fated  
to avoid the slated shore and  
safely embrace the harbor's sand.

He gasps his last breath of loneliness,  
then falls, no jumps into  
the comfort of an elusive destiny.

—Brian Sweany



## The Dance Floor

The radiant bride walked up the aisle, dress flowing.  
The flower girl smiled.  
Pink petals dropped to the floor.  
Each one representing a special moment, time spent together.  
A new life.  
A new understanding.

The bride looked into her husband's eyes, understanding.  
Love flowing.  
A chance at life.  
They smiled.  
Joining hands together.  
They walked out onto the dance floor.

They held on to one another and glided across the dance floor.  
Her father, understanding.  
Realizing that they would no longer be together.  
But love is ever flowing.  
And he smiled.  
As he let his little girl grow up and take on a new life.

Her mother cried, as her daughter left her old life.  
She couldn't bear to stay on the dance floor.  
Wishing she had smiled.  
The flower girl nodded, understanding.  
The tears ever flowing.  
The held on together.

What did it mean to be together?

What would be their new life?  
Peace ever flowing?  
It seemed as if everyone had left the dance floor.  
They felt a new understanding.  
For true friendship brings forth a change in life.  
Everyone was leaving the dance floor.  
Love is ever flowing.

Time took its toll, but she still smiled.  
They were apart, but yet they would always be together.  
The frail old woman nodded, understanding.



## A Vision

A vision sets the spirit free.  
The eagle flies.  
A boy no longer, a man he will be.

A child screams.  
His parched throat letting out the horrid cries,  
as a vision sets the spirit free.

Discovering his true destiny.  
A howling wolf, snarling teeth...trembling, living  
with lies.  
A boy no longer, a man he will be.

Flowing blood, wretched dreams.  
Dark and sinister skies.  
A vision sets the spirit free.

The corrupted paradise of the garden of Eve.  
He lets out his last cry.  
A boy no longer, a man he will be.

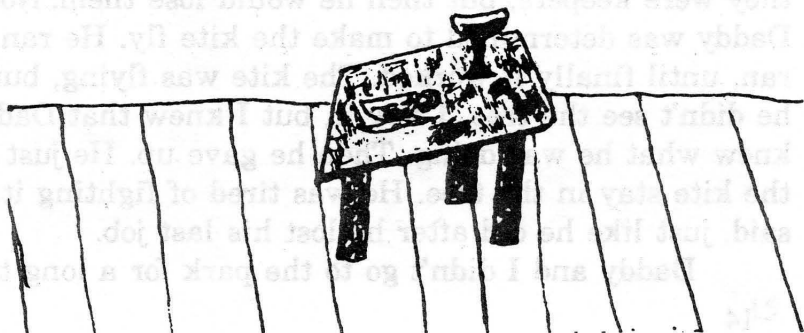
Living with memories.  
Rising above a distant childhood—The eagle  
flies.  
A vision sets the spirit free.  
A boy no longer, a man he will be.

—Jennifer Bola

## Kitchen Silence on Sunday Night

Sipping eucalyptus tea  
I stand in the  
Wooden-floored flat.  
My son sleeps deeply  
Curled under animal  
printed blankets;  
My wife's glass of wine  
Still half full on the  
table.  
Outside, even time has  
fallen  
And frozen-  
As only the moonlight  
Bounces on the graves  
of summer.

—Derek Witte



## Kite Strings

Kerri Leffler

Daddy had been promising me for weeks that some Sunday afternoon we would go to the park, and when the day finally arrived, he brought a kite. I had never flown a kite before, but Daddy said he knew all about it, and that once you knew how it was smooth sailing from there. I laughed at Daddy, he was so smart, and I thought about how I'd be just like him when I grew up.

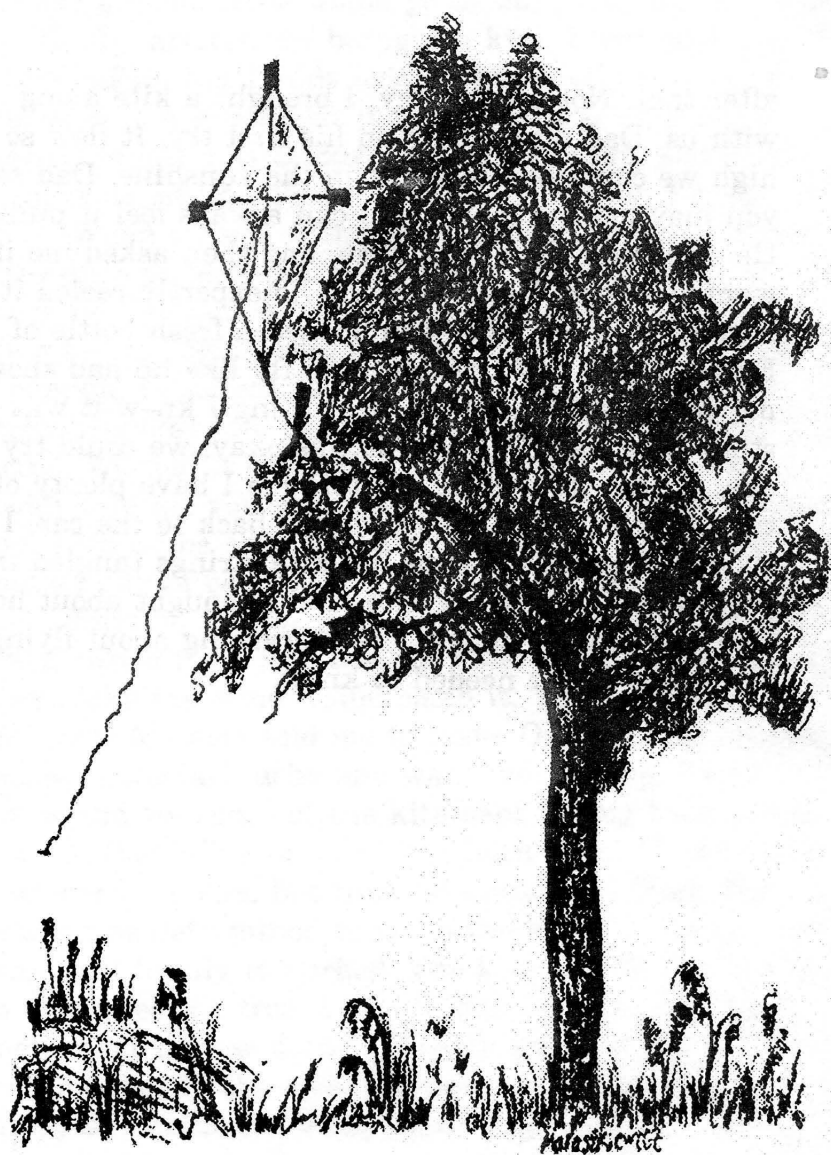
When we got to the park, Daddy let me carry the kite while he blew cigarette smoke into the air to test the wind. He said it would be a good day to fly a kite. Then he said that every day was a good day if you liked it enough. I thought of how much Daddy liked to have a drink everyday. We carefully tied the kite to a ball of string. We tied it extra tight so we wouldn't lose it. Daddy told me you just have to be smarter than the kite and it would be easy to control. Then he popped open another can of beer.

Finally, it was time to fly the kite. He said we would throw it up into the air, start running, and if we were lucky the wind would catch it. That reminded me of the times Mommy told me to leave Daddy alone because he had a stomach ache and was throwing up. So we threw and we ran, but the kite kept falling back to the ground. Daddy had a lot of jobs back then. He would say they were keepers, but then he would lose them. Now Daddy was determined to make the kite fly. He ran and ran, until finally it worked. The kite was flying, but then he didn't see the tree. I saw it, but I knew that Daddy knew what he was doing. Then he gave up. He just let the kite stay in the tree. He was tired of fighting it, he said, just like he did after he lost his last job.

Daddy and I didn't go to the park for a long time

after that. Not until today. I brought a kite along with us. Dad made it fly on his first try. It flew so high we could barely see it in the sunshine. Dad said you may not see it, but you can always feel it pulling. He enjoyed it for a long time, and then asked me if I wanted a turn. I said sure. So he expertly reeled it in, handed it to me, and then opened a fresh bottle of Evian. I took the kite, got it to fly like he had shown me years before, and the next thing I knew it was stuck in a tree. Dad said it was okay, we could try again some other time. He told me I have plenty of time to learn. And as we walked back to the car, I thought I could see some old kite strings tangled in the branch next to my kite, and I thought about how Dad had already taught me everything about flying kites that I ever needed to know.





## The Fatherly Rose

A wilted rose bush lies upon the ground,  
fading back into the place of its birth.  
Its life snuffed out by the early frost,  
breathing for but a moment on this earth.

Gone are its leaves, its petals, its roots;  
No longer for other creatures can it provide.  
Invigorating the world with not only external  
attraction, but beauty as well inside.

Why must this rose die so young,  
a victim of unseasonable cold?  
Was not its wonderful life to shine longer,  
only to pass when it finally grew old?

The seedlings which the rose protected,  
now little flowers in the world alone.  
No great rose to encourage them, nourish them,  
watching how they have grown.

Yet it is within the seedlings power to survive,  
prey to the cold they will not fall.  
This strength stems from the fact  
that a piece of the rose exists within them all.

And as the rose rests silent among its children,  
this is not in anyway the end,  
The wind-blown seedlings gesture not "goodbye,"  
but "until we meet again."

They say a rose's beauty fades-away in the winter,  
when from this world it does part.  
I say the beauty of a rose can be eternal  
when remembered with your heart.

Dedicated to the memory of my father.  
—Brian L. Sweany

## The Motherly Rose

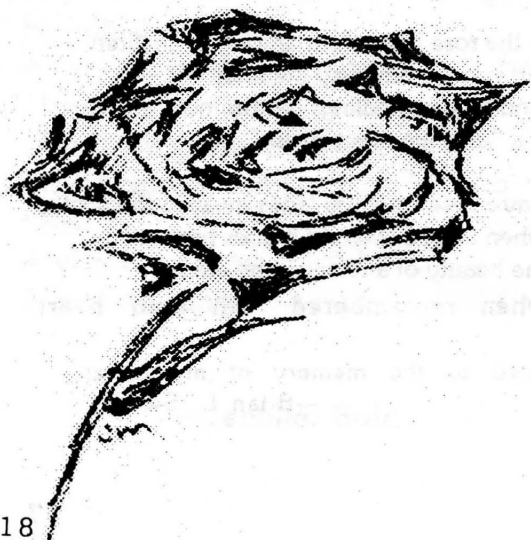
The fatherly rose lived for but a short,  
wondrous time, only to then pass away.  
It is said that its companion rose began to wilt,  
only to grow two feet that same day.

It grew to be even more beautiful,  
compensating for its loss.  
It strived to protect its seedlings,  
no matter what the cost.

Only a short time since the fatherly rose  
from the garden was torn  
And yet there sprang the seedlings- now young  
plants, renewed and reborn.

The rose never forgot her companion,  
as she overcame pain and strife.  
She will honor his memory with hope and love,  
and a new and different life.

Dedicated to my mother, Dianna L. Sweany.  
Her strength and love inspires me.  
—Brian L. Sweany



## Common Desires

We have desired knowledge beyond normality,

We have desired A's on tests.

We have desired wealth beyond riches,

We have desired money to buy a new pair of shoes.

We have desired to buy a new pair of shoes.

We have desired power beyond all kings,

We have desired the power to speak our thoughts.

We have desired a love that would last a lifetime,

We have desired that a date -gone-wrong last no longer.

We have desired looks and beauty to seize the eye of the beholder forever,

We have desired someone to simply say that we look nice today.

We have desired an end to the never-ending search for happiness,

We have desired a story with a happy ending.

We have desired an answer to the question, "Does God really exist?"

We have desired an answer to the question, "What's for dinner today?"

We have desired immortality, a drink from the fountain of youth,

We have desired for our hair not to turn gray when we get older.

We have desired countless friendships that will last forever,

We have desired someone just to listen to our troubles over the telephone.

We have desired to know if there are little green men out there who are wondering if we're out there, too.

We have desired to know why dogs and cats don't get



along.

We have desired streets without crime around every corner,

We have desired answers to where the universe began,

We have desired answers to why time flies when you're having fun.

We have desired an end to death, no such thing as disease,

We have desired a cure for the common cold.

We have desired not to have to fight a war in search for peace,

We have desired not to have to fight the bully down the street.

We have desired the good without the bad.

We have desired the joy without the tears.

—Gregory Scott Beasley

## **Wornout Faith**

The united circles broken by that timeless truth,  
Though their union had been sanctified by a  
child.

Never so unleashed pains as of that night  
When blurred eyes saw no reconciliation.  
Rings once bonded by matrimony now separate  
at the sight of his wife's unknown desires.

Two bodies clashing for mortal desire,  
Yet no shame until the revelation of truth  
When love and honesty must separate  
though slightly gathered for the sake of the  
child  
Who does not understand the need for recon-  
ciliation.  
Who wants the comfort of mommy and daddy  
tonight.

But he still wonders how many unfaithful  
nights  
Did she give herself for some other man's  
desires.  
Rage predicts no hope of reconciliation  
No need to wonder for one night revealed the  
truth.  
Hold the ears and cover the eyes of the child  
as the family she knows forcefully separates.

Sleep child, daddy's denial forbids his heart to  
separate  
And maybe kisses can get him through the  
night  
And maybe this is all a dream so sleep child.  
Bed full, yet empty from the two is marital  
desire.  
Though side by side denial can not hide the

truth.

There would never be a reconciliation.

Her guilt left her without reconciliation,  
But from her lover's side she could not separate.

Whether it was love or not does not change the truth

Of all that was revealed in the act of that night  
When reason was outweighed by desire  
And memory could not recall a husband or  
child. Guilt alone remembered her precious  
child

And tears pounced for their reconciliation  
As the mother-child bond separated.

No begging eyes or words could end the night  
when wrong felt right and lies were the truth.

Despite love, without reconciliation they must  
separate

And marriage between man, woman, and child  
ended that night

When desire led her and revealed the timeless  
truth.

-Annette Roberts

## **Dysfunctional**

I've seen the desecration of the Holocaust,  
I've gaped into the lives of victims,  
I've watched earthquakes tear families,  
I've experienced the AIDS patient and his symptoms.

No man will give that burn some change.  
I've noticed many walk by that cardboard home.  
I've glared at those self-righteous who say he is lazy,  
a spendthrift, a drifter, leave him alone.

I've pierced the eyes of the judgmental,  
and sought to sew my own eyes.  
Knowing I cannot watch another gulf take lives,  
or let oil spills be covered by lies.

Dysfunctional leaks from my words.  
Society, families, my family, me—  
Has it come to my sacred ground?  
Rooted its salt in my family tree?

I caught a glimpse of all of you that run.  
My eyes followed, but my feet kept like stone.  
Carbon monoxide may release you from the race  
yet your voice is nothing but a dramatic groan.

A quick glance and I see blood, yet I peer  
to find the rush oozing up my spine  
The odors of being dysfunctional linger  
Yet I walk away from the fine line.

— Annette Roberts

## It's Just Me...

The biting cold, the smacking wind,  
All I can feel is the leathery touch of the basketball  
in my hand,  
All I can see is the goal,  
All I can hear is the thunderous pounding of my  
heart,  
It's like a drug,  
With a never-ending addiction.

There's nothing on earth like this addiction,  
My shot may be affected by the wind,  
But there's nothing more satisfying than this drug,  
I hold the entire world in my hand,  
A feeling of being overwhelmed with joy fills my  
heart,  
It's just me, the ball, and the goal.

The sweetest sound is that of the ball going through  
the goal,  
Some say it's like a job, I say it's an addiction,  
A burning feeling in my heart,  
The smell of the wild wind,  
A combustion of feelings as the ball leaves my hand,  
Yes! It's a total high, similar to a drug.

I know it's like a drug,  
The sight of the goal,  
Sends shivers through my body, it's a total addiction  
To something I can't control. I crave the feeling of  
the ball in my hand  
I can feel the bitter cold wind,

But there's an overbearing warmth in my heart.

Those who don't feel it in their heart,  
Will never understand the undying need for this drug,  
The feeling is wild, like the wind,  
There's nothing around me except the goal,  
The sound of the ball going through the net is such  
an addiction,  
That I ling for that time of the day when the world is  
in my hand.

As soon as the ball hits my hand,  
I'm not playing with my body, it's all my heart,  
My heart and soul are in a state of total addiction,  
To the helplessness I endure while under this drug,  
I look up and see nothing but the goal,  
And feel nothing but the wind.

The wind in my face, the ball in my hand,  
I see the goal, and feel the pounding of my heart,  
I crave the drug, and live for the addiction.

—Cindy Trefz

## **Stepping Stones**

The Stepping Stones of love  
Are sometimes small  
While others are large;  
Some are side journeys  
Others, dead ends.  
But with each new stone,  
I learn more  
Of others,  
Of myself,  
Of relationships.  
Some never really begin,  
Some seem to never end.  
As one is too lengthy,  
Others are simply too short;  
Some are just right  
At that time.  
But through the latter,  
Crueling days,  
You thank God  
That He intervened.  
Stepping Stones slowly form  
Life's pathway.  
Without a stone,  
Standing in the stream  
Watching the trickles  
Flow on.  
Hope will rekindle  
As the next Stepping Stone  
Makes its presence known.  
Time is continuous  
As is the inevitable stream  
And the beautiful, precious  
Stepping Stones.

—Stacey Clevenger





**Special Thanks to:**  
**Duplicating/Larry Steeb & Joe Doyle**

It is with much delight that we hand over our keyboard and stapler to next year's editors, Lisa Horner and Derek Witte. We would like to wish them the best of luck.

**-April and Stephanie**

The deadline for the Fall edition of **Fioretti** is the October 13th. Please start thinking about short stories, poems, or drawings you would like to submit.