

Joyce's Journal

A monthly dispatch from Joyce A. Miller, Writer



PITTSBURGH AND DOGS!

For a fun writing workshop in August, I participated in A Writer's Friend: Nurturing Your Relationship with Your Dogs. Coheed was invited to attend but with the way he thinks that shiny floors are lava, I thought it best to leave him at home. For our first exercise we wrote an acrostic poem with our dog's name as the title. As you know, in an acrostic poem, each line of the poem begins with a word that starts with a letter in the title. The second exercise was to write about the first time you saw your dog; and then write about the first time your dog saw you. I had never thought about that before, even though I've had Coheed for 10 years. What was it like for him on that first day?

I got an email invitation to submit a short story to the Historical Novel Society of North America which is holding its conference in 2027 in Pittsburgh. The short story should be set in Pittsburgh prior to 1980, and I thought a dog could be the emotional thread in my story. I will write and submit my story and if it's chosen as a finalist, it will be published in HNSNA's anthology. I grew up in Pittsburgh and dogs were a big part of my childhood so I think I can pull this off. And if you didn't know, any story prior to 1980 is now considered historical fiction!

Last weekend my friend Pam and I made our way to the Forest Theatre in Chapel Hill for Paperhand Puppet Intervention's summer show, **The Wild Wisdom of the World**. This year the experience was personal in the best way. As part of my Kickstarter reward, my

A GLIMPSE OF
WHAT'S INCLUDED:

**Coheed and Cambria
acrostic poem!**

was papier-mâché right into the FEET puppet. Watching it come to life alongside Paperhand's usual menagerie of giant beasts, stilt dancers, and glowing masks, all set to their live original score, thrilled me to know a little piece of me was up there on the stage. This year's theme was migration, interconnection, and the wisdom of the natural world.

The weekend of September 26th the James River Writers Conference will be held at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. There will be a full slate of programs on the business and craft of writing. There are panel discussions, workshops, critique sessions with literary agents, opportunities for headshots with a professional photographer, and agent one-on-one meetings. I usually volunteer to help with the agent one-on-ones, and then I get to meet all the agents! The Keynote Speaker this year is Courtney Milan. Before she started writing historical romance, she got a graduate degree in theoretical physical chemistry from UC Berkeley. Does that sound like anyone you know?

As a bonus for this month's newsletter, I'm including my acrostic poem, **CoheedandCambria**. That was Coheed's racing name.

I live in the Church Hill section of Richmond, VA with my husband and my retired racing greyhound. Before I started writing, I worked for 30 years at a nuclear physics research laboratory.

Do what you came here for!



JOYCE A. MILLER, WRITER

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CoheedandCambria

An acrostic poem about my greyhound's racing name.

Cuddly, even though he's like an

Octopus, with arms, legs and tail instead of arms with tentacles.

Headstrong,

Especially on walks when he knows which way he wants to go, and I usually

Enjoy his choice.

Deep brown eyes that say he

Always wants to be,

Next to me.

Dancing or sleeping on the

Couch

And dare I say that he's

My

Baby boy.

Ridiculous to some,

I know.

And still, I say it.