

# This Was Called War at One Time

by Ann Bogle

## TYPING PRACTICE

Typing practice wram up 31

Typing practice warum up #3

Lucy wears ankle bracelets, has three Lucys in the dream, one an arachnid back, embroidered, lucky, Latin. Lucy charms her all the time. Lucy takes her time at the lessons to be a perfect pupil. Lucy discovers other people. Lucy warms the legs and lattice work of the man who comes to fix the plumbing. He sighs in her. Lucy lights his cigarette. A jest. Because really she does not recall liking smoking. Tell Lucy to try Lucky Strike. So? What difference does it make which plumber, which cigarette brand, which day she climbs on the man to assess his penis? Why would a kitty like a penis the size of her leg? A law saying Lucy will like a penis the size of her front arm.

We came back from New Orleans with strange shit—the four of us. We back-tracked along our meals. Of course we ate something harmful, something natural from the bottom of the sea. We thought about it. What is eating? What is natural? What is good? We came to the conclusion that what we eat is of the first importance. We decided that eating is harmful, that not eating is natural, that fighting is normal, that decision is an afterthought.

I was telling A. that we didn't talk much until then which he did or did not perceive. He was telling me that those incompletes from last semester were mine, that we were incomplete, thus forcing him out of school.

This is typing warm-up #1.

*The great end of art is to strike the imagination with the power of a soul that refuses to admit defeat even in the midst of a collapsing world. Up to now my work has been artistic because of my refusal to cry out against my private doom. But now I bellow like a wounded*

*bull who is tormented beyond animal endurance, and the Lama dreads such a revelation of me who have become synonymous with Stoic fortitude and indifference.*

*She quotes my Grave-Song to them: Hail to you, will of mine! Only where there are graves are there resurrections.*

Typing cleansed: 71 wpm.

#### BASTILLE DAY

Then I remember being very happy in those places, with those people who were ordinary, working, drinking men and women, whose fights were more serious than other people's fights. They would call the police. They would call the psych ward, if they had that kind of agreement with authorities. They would call the battered women's shelter, if they had that kind of knowledge. They would as a last resort call their mothers.

Mostly everyone drank and looked for drugs, spent their \$20s on crank or coke or acid.

One day M.K. brought his ex-wife along because she was having her usual difficulties coping with responsibility. Every time she had a breakdown, he treated it as unusual. She would get a hotel room in a hotel downtown neither one of them could really afford, and he would leave his common-law wife and their child and meet her at a moment's notice. They would spend the night in the hotel room, order room service, and in the morning she would go back home, to her father's where she lived with their two children, aged eleven and thirteen.

He carried little infections around with him, and she slept with men for drugs. Once she was raped going with some men for drugs. She brought herself to his house and collapsed. I suppose that after that she didn't think about it as rape when she later had sex for drugs.

#### THEFT

C. and C.S. and A., separately, found my car where I had actually parked it. It had not been stolen; I had lost it.

This is no longer an issue. It is something that did not happen. It did, however, a non-event, set a chain of reactions in motion.

B. can see the perfection in the pretense, the string of stories it produced—not finding my car where I had not parked it. My parents theorized about a car theft ring linked to the Houston Police Department. They stayed up all night. C. and I made a list of luxury clothing items I would claim for insurance purposes were in the car. She said, take them for what you can get because insurance companies loot women. I had put two messages on Professor T.'s answering machine, the first asking about towing practices in his neighborhood, where I thought I had put the car, and the second saying that I no longer needed to know about towing practices because the car had turned up. I also said that my students' papers had been in the car and were now recovered. In fact, the papers had never left my kitchen table and were still there, ungraded.

The police officer who came to my apartment to verify that the stolen car was in my possession was put on hold for twenty minutes. While he waited, he asked me why I was so sad. I told him that I was embarrassed. Be happy, he said, you have your car. Yesterday I had my car, but I was miserable. Then I thought my car was stolen, and I was shocked into real life, as B. put it. What really goes on, he said. The truth occurs once in every one hundred sentences, maybe, about, indeterminate.

The police officer said, don't be sad. My life is sad, I told him. It won't always be, he said. You're a good girl.

#### SCREAM

All night long, during the movie, at the bar afterward—one man, another man, a man's man, a burly man, a man friend, a married man—all night long I wrote in my deeds. I was present tense. I thought of my betrothed. I thought of my brother. I thought of what did not occur last night in the parking lot, after the police had come. The policeman said that the woman's scream had reached fifty decibels. The woman screamed because two clean-cut young men

held her in the air, her legs split, her panties blooming, her upper inner thighs groomed for management.

I did not lie down there with the married man. I did not lie down with that married man. I staved him off to meet the other married man, the one I call my married man. The two men are friends. I am more faithful to my married man than he is to his wife, which is a less obvious statement than it sounds.

The woman broke the law with that scream. I would say that there was pleasure in it, for her. I would also estimate that ten or fifteen men saw it, ten or fifteen men plus me.

For the married man it was part of the atmosphere. It increased his desire, as if we were standing in a field watching a meteor shower. I had to get home—and quick—because my married man was waiting for me.

